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SEVEN COLOUR SECTIONS BRITAIN'S BEST VALUE SATURDAY PAPER



Uma Thurman
The oddball Avenger
the times magazine



David Beckham
Why we will never forgive him for ruining our summer
page 17



£100,000 to be won in cash prizes
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THE TIMES 50p

No. 66,275 SATURDAY AUGUST 8 1998 <http://www.the-times.co.uk>

US embassy bombers kill 70

TERRORIST attacks against American embassies in Africa yesterday left up to 70 dead and more than 1,000 injured in twin blasts in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam.

The scale of the attacks plunged both the Kenyan and Tanzanian cities into chaos, their streets strewn with charred bodies as the emergency services attempted to cope. Western diplomats speculated that Middle Eastern terrorism had spilled over into the soft underbelly of Africa.

Neither embassy was as heavily defended as US missions in the Middle East. It appeared that car bombs had been driven to within yards of the diplomatic compounds. Among those injured was Prudence Bushnell, the US Ambassador to Kenya. Officials said that after treatment for superficial wounds she was back at work yesterday evening. At least seven Americans were among the dead.

Five Tanzanian embassy staff were killed in the Dar es Salaam blast and 58 people were injured. There were not thought to be any American families there.

Last night a visibly shocked President Clinton condemned the "inhuman terrorism" and vowed to bring the bombers to justice.

British backpackers, American diplomats and hundreds of passers-by were caught by flying glass and falling masonry as the bomb went off at 10.35am local time.

Hospitals struggled to treat the casualties. Rescuers, aided by huge spotlights, were still digging through rubble in a desperate search for more survivors last night.

Police investigating the Kenya bombing said they suspected a van packed with explosives and parked behind the embassy caused the blast. When the bomb went off it



Times man DAVID ORR reports from the bombed embassy

A surging mass of people was gathered in a pedestrian precinct behind the embassy. I broke through a police cordon and approached the scene.

Dozens of mutilated bodies were laid out on a patch of grass amid shards of glass and fumes of masonry. Every window in a high-rise bank building had been blown out and a multistorey block beside the embassy had collapsed. On top of the crumpled building - as many as a hundred people were clawing through the rubble.

A huge cheer went up from the crowd as a man was pulled out alive and carried by a human chain to the balcony of a nearby building where he was placed on a stretcher.

I walked through the ground floor of the devastated Kenya Co-op Bank and out on to Haile Selassie Avenue. People sat sobbing or in dazed silence on the footpath. The body of a dead woman was being winched down from the ruined high-rise office block above us.

Another limp body was being pulled from the collapsed office building and two men ran past me with a blood-soaked stretcher. Someone said youths were trying to loot money from what remained of the bank. US Marines brandishing rifles sprang at the crowd to pull back from the embassy perimeter.

I have lived in Nairobi nearly four years. In that time I have reported riots, ethnic unrest, rising violent crime and the murders of a number of Britons. But neither I nor any of my press colleagues ever thought we would see the day when the centre of the Kenyan capital was ripped apart by a bomb. Terrorism came to Africa yesterday, bringing with it a new fear.



An employee of the US Embassy in Nairobi is helped out of the building shortly after the explosion at 10.35am yesterday

was sitting in my study in the Nairobi suburb of Westlands. My first thought was that it was a large collision on the nearby motorway.

But I come from Ireland and have heard bombs explode. Could a bomb have gone off in Nairobi? I wondered? It seemed unlikely. Violent robberies and murders are commonplace here, but not terrorist attacks. My telephone lines were down so it was impossible to make immediate inquiries.

Traffic was being diverted and it took a while to reach the city centre. The air was filled with the wail of sirens and two military helicopters roared low overhead. Crowds of people filled the street. As I ran down Harambee Avenue in the direction of the American embassy I could see a trail of blood on the footpath. I followed it for more than a hundred yards.

Rescuers search, pages 4 & 5

Lottery cash may help teachers to 'recharge'

BY DOMINIC KENNEDY

THE Government is considering expanding a pioneering national lottery scheme that takes teachers out of the classroom and sends them back to college as part of a crusade to improve religious education in primary schools.

The Millennium Awards programme, which receives £737,000 from the lottery, is more than seven-times oversubscribed. Hundreds of teachers are seeking to improve their knowledge of religion during a term of paid leave at university.

One idea is that the scheme, run by the Farrington Institute for Christian Studies in Oxford, could be broadened using lottery money to include teachers of key subjects such as mathematics, science and English.

Chris Woodhead, the chief inspector of schools, has repeatedly highlighted the problem of primary teachers who

Police ready for Beckham

HOSTILITY over David Beckham's World Cup red card has made the Charity Shield, football's traditional relaxed season curtain-raiser, a target for hooligans (Adrian Lee writes).

Police spotters will mingle among the 70,000 crowd tomorrow when Manchester United's star makes his first major appearance since kicking an Argentine player.

Simon Barnes, page 17



Grand jury sees calm Lewinsky

Monica Lewinsky managed to keep her composure when describing her sexual liaisons with President Clinton to the grand jury, although she was clearly embarrassed. The former White House assistant was also said to have apologized for months over the prospect of damaging his reputation. Page 13

Dangerous waste dumps named

A list of the 463 hazardous waste dumps thought likely to pose the greatest risk of causing birth defects is published today by *The Times*, showing where controlled substances such as pesticides and heavy metals are believed to be being tipped. Ministers have ordered an urgent review of the health risks. Page 15

Brocket bikes to freedom

Lord Brocket strode out of Springhill jail after serving time for fraud. Wearing a black leather jacket and jeans he mounted a gleaming Harley-Davidson and roared off back to the good life. Tomorrow he will be at a "breaking out party" given by a fellow former Hussars officer. Page 3

Who are the Oxbridge Masters now?

THE most prized and least onerous academic qualification of the great and the good is under threat from a government-inspired review of post-graduate titles (John O'Leary writes).

For almost two centuries, Oxford and Cambridge graduates have won the right to an MA simply by surviving 21 terms after collecting a bachelor's degree. More than a third of the 30,000 entrants to *Who's Who* are eligible.

However, the system was condemned as anomalous yesterday by the chairman of a working party charged with producing a new framework for academic qualifications. Professor Ivor Crewe, Vice-Chancellor of Essex University, said the ancient universities' MAs would be one of the issues to be addressed in a report to be drawn up next month. Professor Crewe, known to television viewers as a political pundit, has an Oxford MA, but waived the qualification. "I thought it was ridiculous, but I wanted to vote in the election for chancellor of the university. Only about one Oxford graduate in three pays the £10 fee for an MA, acquiring the right to vote for the professor of poetry as well as the chancellor. In Cambridge, where there is no charge, more than half of all graduates have claimed the qualification in recent years.

The Quality Assurance Agency is concerned about the proliferation of Master's titles, but the system may be safe for some time yet.

Although the Government could legislate on the issue, the QAA has no power to order a change.

Leading article, page 19

- Four who collected their MA, left, and four who did not.
- Michael Atherton
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 - William Hague
 - Margaret Thatcher
 - Martin Amis
 - Tony Blair
 - Ian Hislop
 - John Major

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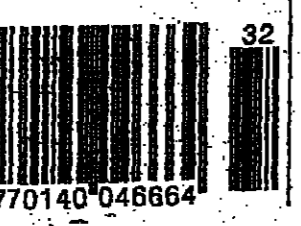
FIVE STAR FRASER

Angus Fraser, the homegrown peace leader took the white flag in England bottled back in the fifth Test Match against South Africa at Headingley. Page 29

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NEXT WEEK IN THE TIMES

MONDAY Cheats and the World Cup, by referee David Elleray

TUESDAY ARTISTS' BRITAIN

WEDNESDAY Body and Mind Prejudice and the disabled

THURSDAY Black movies come of age

FRIDAY New Films New Avengers Can Uma T do an Emma P?

Pop

Embrace: latest queens of Indie

DIANA chapter by Diana Morrison

Murdered boy's father backs IRA bomber's release

Support for Irish Government decision to set Mountbatten's killer free, writes Audrey Magee

THE father of a boy murdered in the IRA explosion that killed Earl Mountbatten...



McMahon: became a model prisoner

John Maxwell, whose 15-year-old son Paul was helping crew Lord Mountbatten's yacht when it was destroyed...

later, he fired a shot from a Browning pistol smuggled into a holding cell of Dublin's Four Courts.

"Keeping him in prison will not unfortunately bring my son back."

The teenager was one of four people killed when the bomb exploded as the Earl's boat, Shadow V, pulled out of Sligo's Mullaghmore harbour.

The blast killed Lord Mountbatten, second cousin to the Queen; Mountbatten's 15-year grandson Nicholas Knatchbull; Nicholas's 82-year-old grandmother Lady Brabourne; and Paul Maxwell from Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh.

McMahon, 50, was arrested before the bomb exploded. He and his accomplice, Francis McGird, had been stopped by police in Sligo. McGird blurted out information about the bomb, leading to their arrest and McMahon's imprisonment in Portlaoise, the high security prison 50 miles west of Dublin.

McMahon served the first 13 years of his life sentence in the IRA wing of Portlaoise prison. He and 10 others, armed with guns and explosives, failed in an attempt to escape in 1985 dressed as prison officers. Three years

In 1992, however, he turned his back on the IRA and was transferred to Arbour Hill, a regular prison in Dublin. "It wasn't that he found the road to Damascus or anything, but just decided to give up on the IRA and gave a pledge to that effect," said one senior prison source.

McMahon became a model prisoner and was transferred to the Mounjo training unit where he learnt carpentry. By 1996, he had been granted day release and went to work each morning as a carpenter, returning to prison at the appointed time each evening. He returned to see his wife, Rose, and two adult sons in Carrickmacross, Co Monaghan, every weekend.

"There was never any trouble from him. The security was so low that there were no bars on the window but he never breached any of the rules," said the source.

McMahon was freed at 9.40pm on Thursday, less than a week after the Dublin government let out six IRA

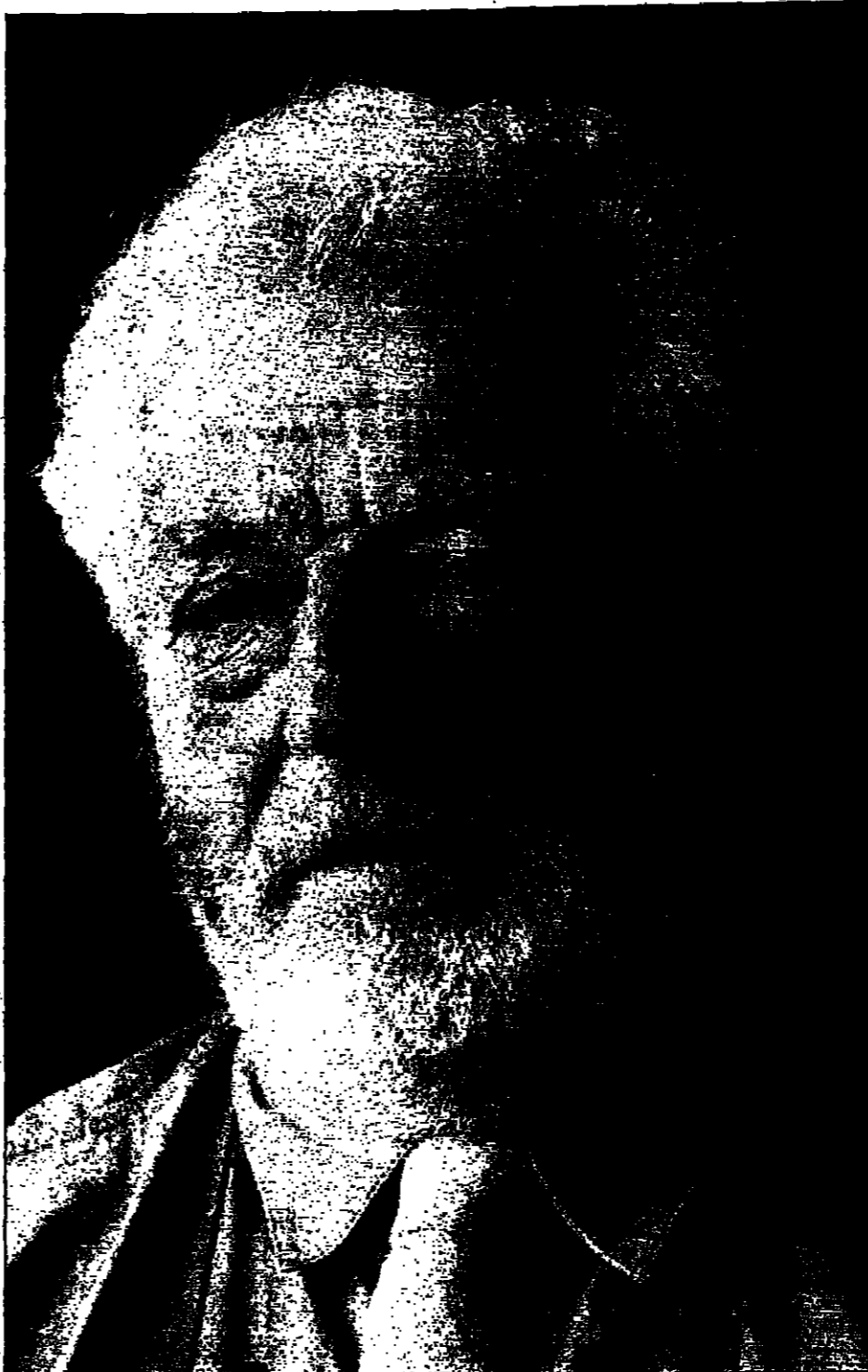
men from the high security Portlaoise under the terms of the Belfast Agreement. It is understood that McMahon was collected by a friend and driven north to Monaghan where he will work as a joiner, possibly setting up his own business. He was not at his family home yesterday.

The release brought a furious reaction from some Unionists and Conservatives who said it was premature and a sop to the IRA. But Ulster Unionist security spokesman Ken Maginnis said: "The release of murderers for political reasons is unpalatable for many of us but we have got to try to find some kind of way forward."

Mr Maxwell, in a statement from France where he is on holiday, said that he would like McMahon to think of what he had done to his son, Paul, an innocent victim of Northern Ireland's Troubles. He said, however, that peace was imperative. "We must look forward so that perhaps Paul's death and those of thousands of others from both sides of the political divide here will not have been entirely in vain," said Mr Maxwell.

The Irish government informed Buckingham Palace of its intention to release McMahon on Thursday. A spokeswoman for St James's Palace said the Prince of Wales had also been informed.

Lord Mountbatten was the great uncle and confidant of the Prince of Wales, who suffered a great deal on learning of his death. An enormously popular member of the Royal Family, Lord Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of India, played a pivotal role in introducing the young Princess Elizabeth to her future husband Philip. He was a



John Maxwell: said that keeping bomber in prison would not bring son back

regular visitor to the west of Ireland, where he enjoyed boating and fishing.

In Ulster, two IRA prisoners' leaders yesterday met the body set up to oversee releases. Padraic Wilson, IRA Officer Commanding in the Maze Prison, and Geraldine Ferrity, who heads the women's wing in Maghaberry jail, were granted 10 hours' leave from jail to join a Sinn Féin

delegation meeting the Sentence Review Commission. It is understood that a meeting took place yesterday.

A woman whose husband was murdered by the loyalist Ulster Volunteer Force is leaving Ulster Volunteer Force in protest at the government's early release of terrorist prisoners.

Sandra Peacock, whose prison officer husband, Jim, died in her arms after being

shot in September 1993, said that she could not live with released terrorists walking the streets. Mrs Peacock, a mother of five, said: "Myra Hindley is still in jail after 30 years in Great Britain. If she tried to get out of jail there would be a public outcry that you would never hear the end of."

"I would not live in a country with terrorists in government," she said.

Jailed Guards could be freed within a month

By Jill Sherman, Chief Political Correspondent

THE two Scots Guards jailed for life for the murder of a Belfast teenager could be released from prison within a month, it emerged yesterday.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, is expected to announce at the end of this month that Jim Fisher and Mark Wright will be freed early in September to coincide with the release of the first terrorist prisoners in Ulster.

The news, which has not been officially confirmed, fol-

lowed the release of the IRA terrorist Thomas McMahon under the terms of the Northern Ireland Good Friday Peace Agreement. Dr Mowlam is under pressure to take similar action over Fisher and Wright.

Reports of the imminent release of the Scots Guards were described as "speculation" by the Northern Ireland Office, but were not denied. Government sources suggested that they were not wide of

the mark. Officials pointed out that Mo Mowlam said she would review the case and make a decision before the end of August. But she leaves today for a two-week holiday and is likely to have already made up her mind.

Fisher, 29, of Ayr, and Wright, 24, of Arbroath, were jailed for life for murdering Peter McBride, 18, while they were on foot patrol in the New Lodge area of Belfast in 1992.

Appeals against their conviction were turned down and a bid to have their cases reviewed early was rejected earlier this year.

At present the Fisher and Wright case is due to be referred back to the Life Sentences Review Board this October, but Dr Mowlam has the authority to release the prisoners at any time, and could decide on an earlier release.

Last night Peter McBride's mother, Jean, warily dis-



Waiting: Mark Wright, left, and Jim Fisher

missed the reports of the Scots Guards' early release.

She said she had been assured by Dr Mowlam that she would be told if any decision had been taken. Continuing speculation only caused further heartache for her. "I would be very very disappointed if Mo Mowlam had shown her hand again by giving special treatment for British soldiers," said Mrs McBride. "If they served out

the full sentence it would ease my pain."

Major Tony Heybourn, a leader of the Fisher and Wright campaign, said that he had had no confirmation of their early release. But he asked why, if the decision had been made, had the soldiers not been already released. "It isn't being even-handed," he said. He suggested that Dr Mowlam did not want to put the ante by releasing prisoners

during the marching season, which ends this month.

Local MP Andrew Welsh, who has been campaigning for the men's release, said he had spoken to Dr Mowlam two days ago and she had told him that her decision would be announced before another 250 paramilitary prisoners are freed at the beginning of next month.

Northern Ireland officials also pointed out that under the Northern Ireland Sentences Bill, which received Royal Assent at the end of last month, prisoners can apply themselves for early release.

Application forms were sent to prisoners on Thursday and both Wright and Fisher would be eligible to apply. Officials said both would be likely to pass all the conditions for release.

The campaign to free the two Scots Guards has won powerful backing from the Conservatives, including Lord Tebbit and retired military chiefs.

Detectives search the hotel room of ex-M16 officer

By Stewart Tendler, Crime Correspondent

SCOTLAND Yard Special Branch officers and New Zealand detectives have searched the Auckland hotel room of Richard Tomlinson, the former M16 officer who threatened to publish secrets, police revealed yesterday.

His hotel room was searched after he tried to leave New Zealand for Australia. The attempt failed because he did not have a visa, police sources said.

Mr Tomlinson, 35, was jailed for 12 months in December last year after admitting trying to sell his story to an Australian publisher. He was released on licence in April.

Mr Tomlinson flew to New Zealand after being held in Paris last weekend at the request of the British Government. In New Zealand he was served with an injunction earlier this week to prevent him disclosing "damaging disclosures" about his four-year career with the intelligence service, which took him to Bosnia and Moscow.

The temporary or interlocutory injunction has been granted against him by the New Zealand courts pending their decision on allowing a permanent ban.

Yesterday John Wadhams, Mr Tomlinson's lawyer and also the director of civil rights group Liberty, said his client was trying to start a new life in New Zealand. Five police officers had carried out the search of his hotel room and seized a number of his possessions.

Mr Tomlinson said that many of these items had already been seized and then returned to him by French police. He added that the presence of British officers at the scene was a "waste of taxpayers' money".

David Shayler, the ex-M15 agent, insisted last night he was "in prison for telling the truth" and said it was "astounding" that the Government was trying to prosecute him.

His statement was read out by his lawyer, John Wadhams, outside the gates of the Paris prison where he has been detained since his arrest in the French capital on Saturday.

Mr Wadhams emerged from La Santé jail after a meeting with his client. The statement said: "The matters that I have brought to the attention of the public are vital issues for our democracy. I should be protected not prosecuted. It is clear that M16 is acting outside government control. M15 and M16 should not be allowed to hide behind secrecy legislation."

Mr Shayler, 32, has a legal battle on his hands to avoid extradition to Britain to face charges under the Official Secrets Act after he fled to France last year following a series of revelations about M15's operations. Mr Shayler, a former M15 desk officer, was arrested amid reports that he was about to put more details about the intelligence service on the internet.

He had been living in a remote farmhouse in France with girlfriend, Annie Machon, while trying to negotiate a return to Britain.

Britain basks in the sun while the Med roasts

By Steve Keenan and Stephen Farrell

SOARING temperatures will send thousands of families to the beaches of Britain this weekend, while in Greece and Turkey scorching heat has driven tourists indoors.

Temperatures of up to 30C (86F) in England and Wales are forecast, with "uncomfortably high" humidity levels and the odd shower in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

In the eastern Mediterranean, a heatwave has ruined the holidays of thousands of Britons, with many people suffering heatstroke and severe sunburn. In Sicily, the thermometer reached 45C (113F); in Bodrum, Turkey, 42.6C (more than 108F); and in Corfu 39C (102F).

Many people cut short their holiday to return home, or moved to air-conditioned hotels. Steve Wright, 26, from Co Down, and Katie Mitchell, 25, from Hampshire, returned early to Gatwick on Wednesday from touring the Greek islands. "Even when there was a breeze, it was like standing in front of an open oven," Miss Mitchell said.

In this country, unbroken sunshine is forecast for the weekend, and motorists face long delays on roads to the coast. An AA spokesman, Adrian Ruck, said: "This has been one of the grimmest summers ever and now people are crying out for a day or two by the coast. We are expecting the M5 to Devon and Cornwall to be chock-a-block right through Saturday."

Forecast, page 28 Travel, page 29



Brother of Hindley's victim tells of jail visits

THE brother of Keith Bennett, the Moors victim, said yesterday that he had met Myra Hindley in prison in an effort to find out where the body is hidden.

Alan Bennett, a 42-year-old storeman from Fallowfield, near Manchester, was speaking for the first time since it was revealed that he had visited Hindley, who murdered his 12-year-old brother with Ian Brady in 1964. She admitted the killing in 1987.

He said in a statement: "It has been 12 years since we knew for certain what had happened to Keith. During that time, this family has tried to do all that could be done to bring Keith home to a proper burial. My visit to Myra Hindley was just another hopeful step towards that."

"We needed to know her recollection of what happened on the night of Keith's disappearance in the hope that some of the details may have been remembered by her."

Jail for the meter man whose love was just the ticket

By Adrian Lee

A FORMER parking meter inspector kept his uniform and stole more than £150,000 from pay-and-display machines to try to keep his demanding wife happy, a court heard yesterday. She walked out on the day he was arrested.

Nicholas Stratford, 33, added a swimming pool, kitchen conservatory and extension to his house, and booked expensive holidays. Isleworth Crown Court was told. He should have handed in his uniform and a device used to open the machines when he left his post with Hounslow Council in 1996. Instead, every Saturday afternoon, he raided the machines, said Irena Ray-Crosby, for the prosecution.

He was jailed for 18 months after admitting five charges of theft and one of going equipped to steal. The court heard that the council realised money was missing and a surveillance operation was arranged. Stratford was seen to empty machines near a shopping centre and put the money in his car boot. When chal-

lenged, he claimed he worked for the council. Later, he broke down and confessed that he had debts of £17,000 from his first marriage and stole to give his second wife the lavish lifestyle she wanted.

He told police that he had been running a disco business which had collapsed and that his wife "pressured him into taking up a lifestyle he could not possibly afford," said Miss Ray-Crosby. "He described himself as 'buying love'. She wanted more material things than he could afford and he went along with it. On the day he was arrested, she left him."

In addition to the work at his home, in Wimerst, Berkshire, Stratford enjoyed a £2,000 holiday to Florida and another trip was booked. Stratford wept in the dock. Anthony Montgomery, for Stratford, said his client was in ruins. "He is a weak man who did allow this lifestyle to keep happy to prolong his continued involvement in these thefts."

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Brock Blair back agent's str Judge ball

Brocket roars down road to freedom

Disgraced Third Baron returns to the spotlight after serving prison sentence for fraud

By CLAUDIA JOSEPH AND DANIEL MCGRORY

PRISONER HG-1031, old Etonian and polo-playing friend of the Prince of Wales, strode out of Springhill jail yesterday intent on making up for lost time.

In a black leather jacket and jeans, Lord Brocket shook hands with the prison governor, nodded to a couple of fellow inmates and, after posing for a photograph, roared off on a gleaming Harley-Davidson motorcycle. The turquoise and silver machine had been loaned for the great escape. Unfortunately, the elaborate attempt to elude pursuing tabloid journalists misfired when the hapless third baron dropped his keys outside the prison gates.

He later switched to a car in a country lane to drive to the home of his mother, Elizabeth Trotter, 15 miles away at Tetsworth, Buckinghamshire, for a modest celebration. Mrs Trotter, 70, said she had forgiven her son.

His return to society after serving half his five-year sentence for a £4.5 million fraud showed he had lost nothing of his passion for publicity. After squandering the family inheritance, losing his wife — the *es*-Vogue model Isa Lorenzo — and being attacked three times in prison, Charles Ronald George Nall-Cain let it be known he was a chastened man.

Witnessing yesterday's performance a close friend said: "He can't help himself. He has no shame and loves being the centre of attention."

Of his release, Lord Brocket said: "Obviously it feels great. It has been quite a long while. I've had a lot of time to reflect on everything. I obviously regret very much any distress I've caused anyone. You really appreciate freedom once you have been inside. It makes you

reassess life and all your priorities and what's important and what isn't. I'm now looking forward to a bit of normality."

Normality begins with a barbecue tomorrow and a welcome from a jazz band at a "breaking out party" at the 1,300 acre Rossway Park estate of a fellow former officer in the 14/20 Hussars, Nigel Hadden-Paton. He is a close friend of the Duchess of York, having ridden escort at her wedding.

Now 46, Lord Brocket denied this was a return to his indulgent playboy days. He described it as "one or two good friends of mine who unbeknown to me have arranged a little get together for those people who have been very supportive of me inside."

"Some people have gone way out of their way to look after me and generally be supportive. They are getting together to welcome me home and back to a new life."

He cannot return to his former life as his family seat, Brocket Hall, Hertfordshire, has been leased to a German company as a hotel. His wife, a convicted drug addict who revealed her husband's insurance scam, has taken their three children to stay with her parents in Puerto Rico.

Brocket has not seen Alexander, 13, Antalya, 11, and William, 7, since he was sentenced in December 1995, but said he intended to visit them as soon as possible.

It was when he faced the collapse of his marriage and financial ruin in 1991 that he devised a plot to defraud insurance companies. While he spent a weekend away with his wife to provide himself with an alibi he had three Ferraris and a Maserati stolen from his private collection worth £20 million by estate workers. He cajoled a chauffeur and a mechanic to help him



Lord Brocket poses for photographers yesterday before leaving Springhill jail on a borrowed motorcycle

dismantle the cars, but could not bring himself to destroy the precious chassis plates, which were found under the floor of the garage where he intended later to rebuild the cars. His wife, who was addicted to painkillers and sleeping tablets, gave evidence

against him. The deal with the German financiers will yield him a handsome income and eventually allow his heir to repossess Brocket Hall when the 60-year lease expires.

He will have a private income of £170,000 a year —

rising to £650,000 after 15 years — but still has debts estimated at £600,000, and those close him doubt he can economise on his indulgent lifestyle.

One said: "Charles always hated not having lots of money. He'll want to use his

title to make millions if he can, because he feels it demeans him as a peer of the realm if he cannot live in style."

His brother, Richard, said: "The title was an enormous ego-boost. Being Lord Brocket became the most important thing in his life."

Sad return to real world fails to raise a cheer

By ALAN HAMILTON

THERE was something sad about Lord Brocket's release from prison yesterday. A friend had lent him a Harley-Davidson on which he could ride off in some style, but it was a rather pathetic re-entry into the real world.

The Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six, not to mention the Pentonville Two of distant dock-strike days in the 1970s, emerged from incarceration to the cheers and hugs of supporters, sometimes to be carried shoulder-high as heroes. A man who dismantles Ferraris and makes a fraudulent insurance claim does not warrant such adulation.

Lord Brocket, denied the cheers of the multitude, had to make a small egotistical gesture of his own. Motorcycles have had their place in the canon of release ever since Steve McQueen used one after escaping from a German prisoner-of-war camp in *The Great Escape*. But it was not a Harley-Davidson and it certainly did not gleam.

Much the most stylish release from prison was conducted by Michael Caine in *Alfie*, when he waved goodbye to his wardens in a stolen Rolls-Royce. Real life rarely imitates art in that regard; the mark of celebrity release nowadays is a press conference.

Hundreds of reporters and cameramen swarmed around Louise Woodward when she was released earlier this year. Mike Tyson was collected from penitentiary in a large black limo, and his first act as a free man was to hold a 76-second press conference, in which he announced that he would carry on boxing.

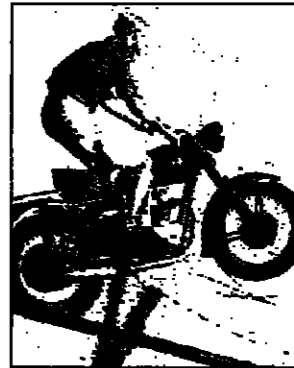
Los Angeles county jail could not wait to get rid of

O.J. Simpson. It was less than 25 minutes from the judge's order that he be released to a private van picking him up and hitting the freeway.

Big crooks sometimes prefer anonymity. When the Old Etonian fraudster Darius Guppy was released from Ford open prison two years ago, he was driven away in a prison officer's car.

Those released from prison seek swift acceptance back into the outside world. One of the fastest rehabilitations on record was that of Gerald Ronson, jailed for his part in the Guinness scandal. Within days of walking free from Ford open prison he was nibbling canapés at a fundraising function at the Natural History Museum in the presence of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Ronson proved that disgrace is not what it used to be. Lord Brocket proved merely that he appears a sad and lonely figure, who has lost not only his Ferraris and his stately home, but also his wife and children. A purple motorcycle is poor recompense.



Steve McQueen, star of *The Great Escape*

Blair backs woman soccer agent's struggle for equality

Ministers could change sex discrimination laws, writes Daniel McGrory

TONY BLAIR is backing a campaign by Britain's only women's football agent to change the chauvinist behaviour of the players' union.

He has written to Rachel Anderson deploring the Professional Footballers' Association for sticking to its "men only" rule and banning her from its official functions.

Mrs Anderson said that many of the game's biggest names, including several managers and international players, were backing her fight for equal rights. She believes her struggle will change the character of English football. "I'm surprised but delighted that Mr Blair found time to get involved, but as he said to me, he cares about the game and loathes discrimination," she said.

What began as a snub at the association's annual awards dinner has persuaded Mrs Anderson, 41, to try to force the PFA to accept female members and to recognise women's football, the Football Association already does.

"They will rue the day they [the PFA] chucked me out of their awards dinner, but this is not revenge, more an attempt to drag the PFA and the game out of the dark ages," she said. Mrs Anderson represents 27 players, including Julian Dicks of West Ham,



Anderson with a West Ham supporter earlier this week

Mike Hughes at Wimbledon and Everton's Don Hutchinson, and is regarded as a formidable negotiator. Mrs Anderson, who drives a Rolls-Royce, said: "Women's soccer grows ever more popular, and in America the top women players are dollar millionaires with crowds of 60,000 plus to see the best professional teams. That can happen here."

Her case has persuaded ministers that they need to consider a change to the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act.

Last week, armed with Mr Blair's letter, Mrs Anderson met senior officials at the Equal Opportunities Commission. They are to present recommendations to ministers in the autumn, but a senior

commission official said yesterday: "We have every sympathy with her case and don't believe the PFA is acting correctly under the law, but obviously that is for a court to decide. Unfortunately the Sex Discrimination Act does not outlaw all sex discrimination, which is why ministers want to look at the law again."

In his letter, Mr Blair acknowledges that ministers need to study the rules about private clubs being allowed to decide who can attend their functions. But he backs his Sports Minister, Tony Banks, in boycotting PFA functions that exclude Mrs Anderson. "His letter concedes the difficulties and says it may require Parliament to change the law

because of the loophole about private clubs," Mrs Anderson said.

She is now considering legal action against the union for damaging her business. "These functions are not just for back slapping. Sponsors are there and it is a chance to do deals for your players. Potential clients are going to think, 'if she can't get in here, will she be welcome in Alex Ferguson's office or will Ken Bates deal with her?'"

Mrs Anderson, who was invited to the union's annual awards ceremony in April by Julian Dicks, was told by officials to leave the drinks reception before the dinner began. Gordon Taylor, chief executive of the PFA, said in a letter to her afterwards: "It was a private function and the PFA is entitled to invite whoever it wants. If we start to invite wives and girlfriends, then we would have to limit the numbers of players."

The Football Association said it was surprised at Mrs Anderson's ban, saying that recent initiatives in the sport have been aimed at eradicating racism and sexism. "The PFA are going against the current trend for football to be available to everyone", a spokesman said.

Football, pages 36-38

Judge balks at wallpaper bill

By ROBIN YOUNG

THE wallpaper would undoubtedly have met with the approval of Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor with a taste for expensive décor, but a judge reacted with outrage yesterday when a plaintiff claimed that it would cost £35,000 to re-paper five rooms in her London home. "I would not pay that bill," said Michael Dean, QC, the judge at Central London County Court, and cut the estimate for the redecoration required by £20,000.

Lady Colin Campbell, the socialite and authoress, was suing the former tenant of her Georgian town house in Piccadilly, southwest London — an American called Anna Rothschild who was said to use 14 other aliases — for damage caused when she had wallpaper in five rooms including the main drawing room and the master bedroom painted beige despite express instructions that it was not permitted.

Lady Colin claimed that to restore the integrity of her interior décor she would have to commission hand-painted wallpaper. She said she had spent £100,000 redesigning the house only two years



Lady Colin Campbell: suing tenant

before letting it out last December. Lady Colin told the judge: "If you design a house properly there is synchronicity and co-ordination and mirroring." She told the judge that wallpaper in some parts of the house was the same design as in others, although in different colours. It would be disastrous, she said, if the same design

was not used as replacement, but the paper she required was no longer commercially available. "It is no longer like as like. It is like and dislike," she told the judge, adding: "You are mixing pigs and dogs."

The judge plainly did not share Lady Colin's taste. "You are asking to replace mass-produced wallpaper with bespoke wallpaper for reasons that are not persuasive, convincing or adequate," he told her. "I'll give you £15,000. There is totally unsatisfactory evidence of loss in this case."

Lady Colin had already won repossession of the house and an order for more than £15,000 in unpaid rent at a previous hearing in the same court last month. She said after the award that she was pleased with the result, and said she was now considering moving back into the house. She said she had let the property to help to pay medical bills for her aunt, the house's owner.

Lady Colin, whose title derives from a short-lived 1970s marriage to a Scottish aristocrat, said that Mrs Rothschild, who was not in court, had left the house looking "like a pigsty".



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TERRORISTS TARGET AMERICAN EMBASSIES

Shocked Clinton condemns inhumane attacks

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Clinton last night condemned the "abhorrent" terrorist attacks on the United States embassies in East Africa. The bombings, which came without warning, shocked Washington, which had not regarded its missions in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam as high-risk targets.

AMERICA

ordered flags at all US government buildings at home and abroad to be flown at half mast for those who had been killed.

"To the families and loved ones of the American and African victims of these cowardly attacks, you are in our thoughts and prayers. We are determined to get answers and justice," he said.

As the extent of the carnage in the two cities became clear, Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, abruptly cut short a personal trip to Rome. She had flown to Italy overnight for the wedding of her spokesman James Rubin,



Kenyan rescue workers lift an injured man from the wreckage of a building near the American Embassy after a car bomb brought death and destruction to central Nairobi

who would normally have been dealing with the crisis, the CNN reporter, Christiane Amanpour, Ms Albright flew back to Washington immediately on arrival.

The US Air Force sent two military aircraft from Ramstein in Germany to the stricken cities. A C9 Nightingale designed for medical evacuation was heading for Dar es Salaam and a C141 cargo plane, with a surgical team and blood and medical supplies, flew to Nairobi.

FBI agents were also flying out to begin working on the ground to discover who was responsible. The State Department, including its counter-terrorism section, was thrown into turmoil.

With communications severely disrupted in the two cities, and no immediate credible claim of responsibility, officials struggled to offer a clear picture of what had happened. They refused to speculate as to who might be responsible.

A State Department task force was said to be investigating possible links to threats made this spring from a fundamentalist group based in Egypt. The State Department suggested, however, that they were working on the assumption that the co-ordinated attacks had not been made by local groups but had come from outside Kenya and Tanzania.

"All fingers point not to internal but to external groups. There is no reason to think local political conditions would have resulted in such a massive attack against our embassy," said one official.

Security at embassies had been stepped up after rocket-propelled grenades exploded close to the embassy in Beirut in June. However, it was not known if extra precautions had been taken in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, neither of which would be considered particular targets. The Nairobi embassy was heavily fortified with vehicle access limited by road blocks but was, nevertheless, close to a main road.

The smaller Dar es Salaam compound was less highly protected but had a similar, conspicuous presence of US Marines. The attacks highlight the difficulties of defending buildings in city centres.

Leading article, page 19

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST ELECTRICAL STORES

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Bin Laden: taunted US with warnings of a "black day"

Style of attacks suggests work of Islamic zealot

By Sam Kiley, Africa Correspondent

With lax airport security and thousands of miles of porous borders with countries in a state of war, Kenya and Tanzania presented a soft underbelly to the international terrorists who detonated two car bombs outside American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam yesterday.

The prime suspect, intelligence sources said last night before formal investigations, is Osama bin Laden, 44, a Saudi Arabian born Islamic fundamentalist zealot behind a wave of similar bomb attacks, who has good contacts in East Africa.

With extensive links inside Sudan, where Mr bin Laden is based when he moves outside Afghanistan and in Somalia, where he has a network of extremists on his payroll, he would have had little difficulty in smuggling the explosives and detonators required to devastate reinforced concrete buildings in both Kenya and Tanzania.

Rescuers in Nairobi search for signs of life

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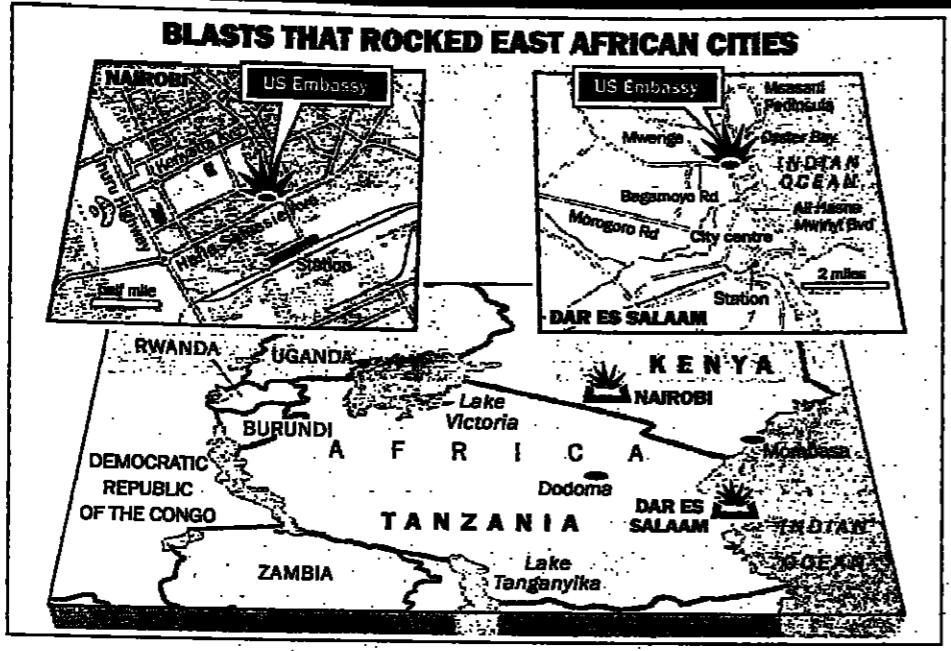
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TERRORISTS TARGET AMERICAN EMBASSIES



Rescuers scour Nairobi rubble for signs of life

THE American Ambassador to Kenya, Prudence Bushnell, was among those injured by the car bomb attack on the US Embassy in Nairobi yesterday.

FROM DAVID ORR IN NAIROBI KENYA A patch of grass behind the embassy. The blood-spattered ground was ankle-deep in glass and masonry.

way, please make way," shouted a team of rescuers as a badly lacerated body of a woman on a stretcher was lowered from the third floor of the Kenya Co-op Bank opposite the embassy.



Prudence Bushnell, the United States Ambassador to Kenya, being led to a waiting car by embassy staff



Bushnell: escaped with minor injuries US envoy criticised election violence

Washington: Prudence Bushnell, the US Ambassador to Kenya who escaped with minor injuries, has been a career Foreign Service employee since 1981 (Damian Whitworth writes).

LOWEST DIGITAL LINE RENTAL advertisement featuring an Ericsson GA628 mobile phone and a Vodafone logo.

Diplomats feel force of huge explosion

A THIRD of the American Embassy's front wall was ripped away in the blast that rocked Dar es Salaam yesterday.

TANZANIA

parked next to it exploded. The air filled with dust and smoke. We could hear someone crying. There was a woman trapped under the wall, which had fallen down.

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Lawyer who
hated giving
bad news
struck off

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Lawyer who hated giving bad news is struck off

Heavy workload led to young man's downfall, reports Shirley English

A LAWYER who could not bear to give his clients bad news has been struck off after issuing false divorce papers in cases he could not resolve.

Kenneth Anderson was so "anxious to please his clients" that he used £1,500 of his own money to make alimony payments to two women.

When pressure of work and inexperience meant that he failed to deal adequately with their cases, he deliberately misled them out of "panic and fear".

Mr Anderson, 30, issued four false divorce decrees to clients and misinformed four others about other court actions, as a way of coping with his heavy workload.

One woman thought she would have to cancel her wedding and honeymoon to Majorca when she discovered a few weeks before it was due to take place in March that she was still married.

Mr Anderson, from Linlithgow, West Lothian, told her she had been divorced two years earlier.

He also told two women that their legal bids to increase their alimony payments had been successful when he had not even got round to raising a court action.

From May 1996, he made up to five monthly payments of £160 to Mrs S and from August to November 1997, he made four monthly payments of £180 to Mrs E.

In a written judgment issued yesterday by the Scottish Solicitors Discipline Tribunal in Edinburgh, Mr Anderson's behaviour was condemned as "crass and irresponsible and wholly inexcusable".

The tribunal found him guilty of professional misconduct over misleading clients, issuing false extracts of court decrees and intercepting a letter addressed to a senior partner.

Mr Anderson, who is married with two young daughters, admitted all the charges brought by the Law Society of Scotland. The Procurator Fiscal at Linlithgow is considering a police report and Mr Anderson could face criminal charges for fraud.

The scandal first came to light when Salina Linn, 35, from Fauldhouse, West Lothian, who is partially sighted, discovered that her divorce papers were fake.

Her fiancé Robert Topping, also registered blind, uncovered the fraud when he went to post the marriage banns at the local register office in March.

She contacted her solicitors, Caesar & Howie, in Livingston, where Mr Anderson had dealt with her case, and they confirmed she was still married. Mr Anderson had moved in August 1996 to Alcourt, also of Livingston.

It emerged that he had failed to lodge the necessary affidavit evidence when the sheriff dealing with her divorce and custody case had asked for further information.

When Mr Anderson was questioned by Mrs Linn about the progress of her court battle, he had told her it had been successful.

In January 1996, he made up and handed her a false extract divorce decree and told her she had custody of one of her two children, Caesar & Howie was able to obtain her divorce the day before she was due to remarry.

Mrs Linn said that in all her dealings with him, she had thought him "a really nice man".

The lawyer, who is married to Fiona Hyslop, an executive member of the Scottish National Party, was struck off from the Roll of Solicitors in Scotland in June, although the tribunal's decision was not issued until yesterday.



Linda McCartney's photographs of her husband and daughter, and of Mick Jagger, are among the exhibits at Liverpool's Walker Art Gallery



Snapshots of Linda's life to go on display

By A CORRESPONDENT

PICTURES taken by the late Lady McCartney spanning 30 years are to go on display in Liverpool. The 14 images include a shot of her husband, Sir Paul, with their baby daughter Mary tucked inside his jacket.

They were given to Liverpool's Walker Art Gallery by Lady McCartney in 1978, but have never been shown in the city. Two of the images being shown at the Walker are from her earliest work, taken in 1966 when she worked in the offices of the American society magazine *Town and Country*.

She went to New York harbour with her camera and, being taken for a photo-journalist, managed to board a yacht being used by the Rolling Stones to promote their album, *Aftermath*. She took pictures of Mick Jagger and Brian Jones and later sold them to journalists, leading to a successful career as a freelance photographer.

Peter Betts, the exhibition organiser, said: "Liverpool being Sir Paul's hometown, it seems appropriate that we should put on a display, and people will see just how good a photographer Linda McCartney was." The exhibition runs until September 6.

Scargill's passion for job leads to marital split

Paul Wilkinson on the loneliness behind break-up

FRIENDS of Arthur Scargill and his wife, Anne, yesterday blamed the break-up of their 37-year marriage on his all-consuming passion for the National Union of Mineworkers.

A family friend said Anne Scargill moved out of the family home several months ago because she was lonely in the isolated luxury house in South Yorkshire. "The break-up has been known about by friends and family for some time but everyone agreed to say nothing about it," said the friend.

"There is no animosity between Anne and Arthur and I have no idea if all this will end in divorce." The friend said there was no third person

involved on either side. Mrs Scargill, 55, has gone to stay with their only child Margaret, 36, a GP, who lives about a mile away in the Worsborough district of Barnsley.

"There were no neighbours she could have a chat with over the garden fence," said the friend, who did not want to be identified. "One of the problems has always been that Arthur is a workaholic. He is fanatical about it. He was always travelling all over the place and it got to the stage where Anne was lonely."

"The Scargills' home, Trelands, a sprawling stone house with two single-storey extensions; lies in well-manicured grounds which were

once the corner of a farmer's field. At the end of a long lane, it is surrounded by tall conifers, planned to screen the home from prying cameras. Inconspicuously, the M1 motorway lies on the other side of the lane.

At one time, Anne had the companionship of three geese, Gadafi, Gorbachev and Gromyko, but they have long since gone.

Yesterday Mr Scargill, 60, was understood to be at his flat in the Barbican, which he uses when on union business in the capital. His press officer, Neil Myers, did not return calls. The union headquarters in Barnsley, where Mr Scargill often uses a small flat after working late, was

WHAT DO I WANT? OUT! WHEN DO I WANT IT? NOW!



closed for the holidays. Calls to members of the NUM executive all went unanswered. The Scargills met when Arthur was 23 and Anne was a 19-year-old electrical welder. On their first date he took her

for a ride on his motorbike, but the next time they met Arthur took her to hear him speak in a debate on the Common Market. They married in 1961.

Initially Mrs Scargill took a back seat in his political activities, working in the Barnsley Co-op accounts department for 32 years until she was made redundant in 1996. She subsequently won reinstatement at an industrial tribunal.

She became politically active during the 1972 miners' strike, organising meetings and rallies. During the 1984 pit strike, she led Women Against Pit Closures, standing with miners and their wives on picket lines and organising a soup kitchen. Since then she has been involved in sit-ins at mines

under threat of closure and tried to disrupt open-cast mine working. She has also spent time with peace protests.

Last March she failed to win a by-election on Barnsley Council as the candidate for the Socialist Labour Party her husband launched before the general election last year. She once said of her private life: "Arthur never interferes, he recognises that I'm a person in my own right. The only thing we have in common is a love of dogs and I suppose our politics. I only hope he votes for me."

"I like to rock and roll, he doesn't. I like holidays he doesn't. I have to go to Benidorm with the girls. I'm outgoing whereas Arthur, when he's not performing, he is very shy and reserved."

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Pig farmers fail to bring home bacon

European glut is posing problems in Britain, says Michael Hornsby

As pork is left out of the noodle bowl in hard-pressed Far Eastern households, the least predictable side-effect of Asia's economic crisis is a population explosion among British pigs.

The collapse of stock markets from Tokyo to Hong Kong has come at the worst time for Britain's pig farmers who, in a fit of optimism, had increased the size of the national breeding herd to eight million sows.

The British are more fond of pigs than any other farmyard animal. When the "Tamworth Two" escaped from an abattoir in January and went on the run, they became national heroes. At the same time, we love eating pigs. Every part of the animal's anatomy is used in some dish.

The Dares export more pig meat than any other European country, last year shipping 152,000 tonnes of pork to Japan and 26,000 to South Korea. Now, however, they are trying to sell much of that closer to home. A glut of pig meat in Europe has driven prices down and forced farmers to sell animals for less than they spend on rearing them.

Ben Gill, the president of the National Farmers' Union, said: "The pig industry is in a melt-down, with farmers getting up to £20 a pig less than their production costs and relying on the mercy of their bank managers for survival. It is not a case of how many can hang on for six months in hope of an upturn, but whether any will be around next month."

The British crisis is so stark that Nigel Rowe, the vice-chairman of the NFU's pig committee, has come close to abandoning pigs altogether. Until April, he was "finishing" 5,000 to 6,000 pigs a year — rearing on to slaughter weight animals bought from other

farmers. "I could see the way things were going. It was costing me up to £40 to finish a pig, and with the prices prevailing back in April, I was barely breaking even. So I decided to close down. It was the right decision. At today's prices I would be making a loss of up to £15 an animal."

At this time of year, Mr Rowe would normally have 1,500 pigs being fattened at Lilley's Farm near Colchester, Essex. He has instead cut his herd to no more than 30.

British producers say the strong pound is exacerbating their plight, sucking in cheap imports. Last year, foreign farmers provided 50 per cent of the bacon, and just over 10 per cent of the pork, eaten in this country.

Because Britons have such affection for pigs, farmers complain that they are handicapped by the costs of complying with higher animal welfare and health standards than are required of most of their foreign competitors.

Seven years ago the Conservatives began phasing out the intensive "stall and tether" system of pig breeding. It will be prohibited from next January. Stalls and tethers, which reduce production costs and increase litter size, will remain in legal use on the Continent until at least 2005. Sows are confined in a slatted concrete pen, barely able to move, during pregnancy.

British farmers have spent £230 million converting their pig sheds into more spacious "loose-housing" units to conform with the new rules. More than 20 per cent have switched to free-range pig-rearing outdoors, only possible on dry, quick-draining land.

A further grievance is that British producers are prevented by BSE restrictions from feeding their pigs on meat and



Nigel Rowe has cut his herd to 30 because of the glut



Butch and Sundance, the "Tamworth Two", became national heroes when they ran away and escaped the slaughterer

bone meal. This has forced them to switch to more expensive fishmeal or vegetable-based feeds, costing an estimated £46 million a year.

Farmers say supermarkets, caterers and processors should be doing far more to promote the British product with its higher animal welfare standards, instead of opting for cheaper imports.

The big retailers insist they are moving towards requiring all their foreign pork and bacon suppliers to meet British welfare standards, though only Tesco and Safeway appear anywhere close to achieving this goal.

farmers. "I could see the way things were going. It was costing me up to £40 to finish a pig, and with the prices prevailing back in April, I was barely breaking even. So I decided to close down. It was the right decision. At today's prices I would be making a loss of up to £15 an animal."

At this time of year, Mr Rowe would normally have 1,500 pigs being fattened at Lilley's Farm near Colchester, Essex. He has instead cut his herd to no more than 30.

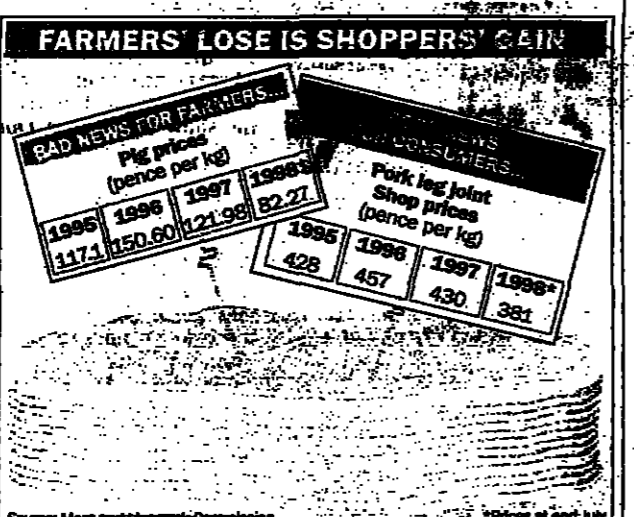
British producers say the strong pound is exacerbating their plight, sucking in cheap imports. Last year, foreign farmers provided 50 per cent of the bacon, and just over 10 per cent of the pork, eaten in this country.

Because Britons have such affection for pigs, farmers complain that they are handicapped by the costs of complying with higher animal welfare and health standards than are required of most of their foreign competitors.

Seven years ago the Conservatives began phasing out the intensive "stall and tether" system of pig breeding. It will be prohibited from next January. Stalls and tethers, which reduce production costs and increase litter size, will remain in legal use on the Continent until at least 2005. Sows are confined in a slatted concrete pen, barely able to move, during pregnancy.

British farmers have spent £230 million converting their pig sheds into more spacious "loose-housing" units to conform with the new rules. More than 20 per cent have switched to free-range pig-rearing outdoors, only possible on dry, quick-draining land.

A further grievance is that British producers are prevented by BSE restrictions from feeding their pigs on meat and



The private lives of wily porkers

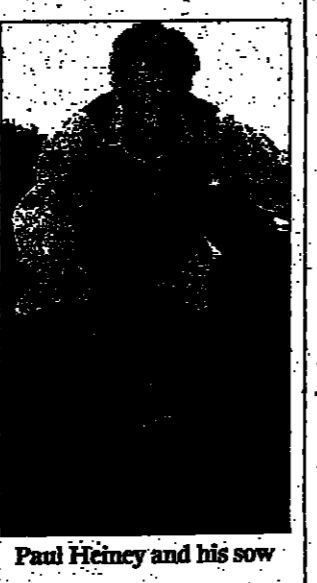
By PAUL HEINEY

ONE can only assume that when they chose man's best friend, the pig did not bother to enter the contest. Otherwise it would have won.

But that would be typical of a pig: to prefer the sanctity of a muddy wallow and idleness in dappled shade to the sordid demands of public performance. It is only when you have kept them on a small scale, as I have, that you are allowed glimpses of the way the pig organises its highly civilised world for its own comfort.

If they do not like where you have put the feeding bowl, they toss it to a preferred position with one deft flick of the snout; if they are not enjoying the confinement of the pig sty, they work at it with a nose and teeth till it is as they wish it to be. Even if that means reducing a brick wall to rubble.

One sow of ours made the apparently fatal error of giving birth to 13 piglets while having only 12 teats. As each piglet is assigned its own teat for the suckling period, this



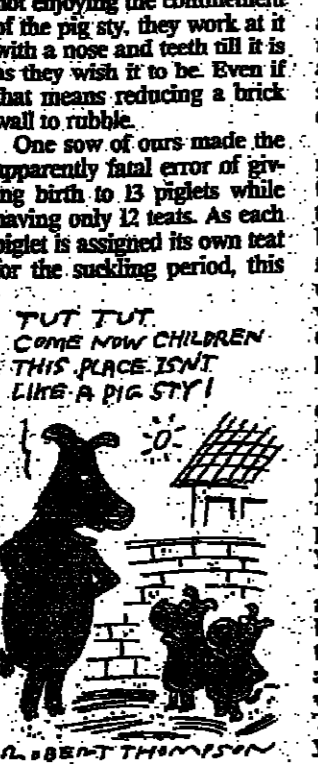
Paul Heiney and his sow

appeared to be extremely bad news for number 13. The vet's advice was that the runt should be bottled or put out of its misery.

But we allowed the sow to run things her way. It nudged the runt into life and taught it to drive for the first teat that became free, so that it could mop up the leftovers. We used to watch it making its way along like a desperate drunk at closing time, sipping the dregs.

Now pigs have become part of a semi-industrial process: not only are their lives demeaned but the food they provide us with has deteriorated to a poor echo of what pig meat used to be, a mere 50 years ago.

The sooner the words pig and industry are divorced the better. Then the pig can lead the life it deserves, and if we are prepared to pay the price we will eat the better for it. That is what a pig would tell you.



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Model wins Brunei 'sex parties' payout

A SECRET deal between a British model and associates of the Sultan of Brunei has paved the way for a new legal offensive by Shannon Marketic, the American beauty queen whose claims of sexual coercion and depravity have sullied the atmosphere at the Sultan's palace for two years.

The anonymous British woman, once runner-up in a Miss United Kingdom contest, has reached an undisclosed settlement in an explosive lawsuit she filed against the Sultan's brother and others after visiting Brunei in 1996, sources say.

In a sworn statement — signed "Jane Doe" to protect her identity — she claimed she was lured to the oil-rich sultanate under false pretences and the promise of \$3,000 (£1,800) a day, only to find that her "primary function while in Brunei was to attend nightly parties held in a disco room within the palace along with at least 30 other young women... from whom Prince Jefri and his friends selected sexual partners". The Jane Doe deal is said to have been agreed in Hawaii within the past two weeks. It is the closest the prince has come to acknowledging the existence of thinly disguised prostitution in the opulent 1,788-room palace that is home to one of the world's richest men — as well as to his two wives and dozens of racehorses in air-conditioned stables.

Until now the sultanate's troubled first family has managed to quash allegations of sleaze by claiming a version of diplomatic immunity.

Ms Marketic, a devout Christian and former Miss

Briton's legal victory paves way for challenge by former beauty queen, writes Giles Whittell in Los Angeles

USA, has twice filed lawsuits alleging that she was groped, gassed and pressured to have sex with Prince Jefri's friends.

So far, she has been thwarted by a Los Angeles judge who, against the advice of the US State Department, granted the prince sovereign immunity as the brother of the leader of a friendly power.

A Hawaiian judge was less sympathetic to the 44-year-old billionaire dubbed Brunei's "randy royal" by New York tabloids.

Rejecting the immunity claim in Jane Doe's case, the judge forced the prince to choose between an out-of-court settlement and a potentially humiliating trial.

The Hawaii ruling ensured that Brunei's worst sex scandal in years will not go away.

On Tuesday lawyers for Ms Marketic will seek an immediate appeal of Prince Jefri's immunity. They have also submitted, to a Los Angeles court, dozens of pages of new details to support a claim that the prince and his associates have for years been running an international prostitution ring centred on Brunei and exclusive hotels owned by the Sultan around the world.

Ms Marketic has admitted that she never met the Sultan or Prince Jefri, and both men have consistently denied her charges.

But her lawyer, David Jaroslawicz, insisted this

week: "They had an entire network funneling beauty queen types to Brunei. It was an open secret. Police knew about it in Los Angeles. Heidi Fleiss [the so-called Hollywood Madam jailed for tax evasion] was nickels and dimes compared with this."

The scandal began when Ms Marketic was offered a first-class ticket to Brunei and \$21,000 a week for unspecified "promotional work" at the palace. She was recruited with the help of an acquaintance, Priscilla Delgado, who was also offered a similar deal. It included "a so-called secrecy agreement which essentially said that I would have to engage in sexual relations in order to get paid to go to Brunei," Ms Delgado has said under oath.

In another affidavit, George

Chock, a former security consultant for the Brunei royal family, has stated that when traveling in the US "a harem of approximately 15-20 women accompanied Prince Jefri".

Mr Jaroslawicz claimed in an interview that Prince Jefri's underlings used Ms Marketic's wholesome reputation to persuade "Ms Doe" and others that the Brunei assignment was above board. Once there, both women say they had to concoct elaborate ruses to get out, with the British model writing to her fiancé in code before fleeing with the excuse of a family emergency.

The prince was fond of ferrying his entourage around the globe in a private Boeing 747, but his high life may now be over. Last month he dropped out of public view after an unprecedented rift with the Sultan over losses of up to \$16 billion at the Amedeo Development Corporation, which he used to head.

Asked where he was, a spokesman said recently: "Anywhere but Brunei. He won't go near the place."



Former Miss USA Shannon Marketic claims she was pressured to have sex in Brunei

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The Sultan: his palace sullied by accusations. Prince Jefri: toured "with harem of up to 20 women"

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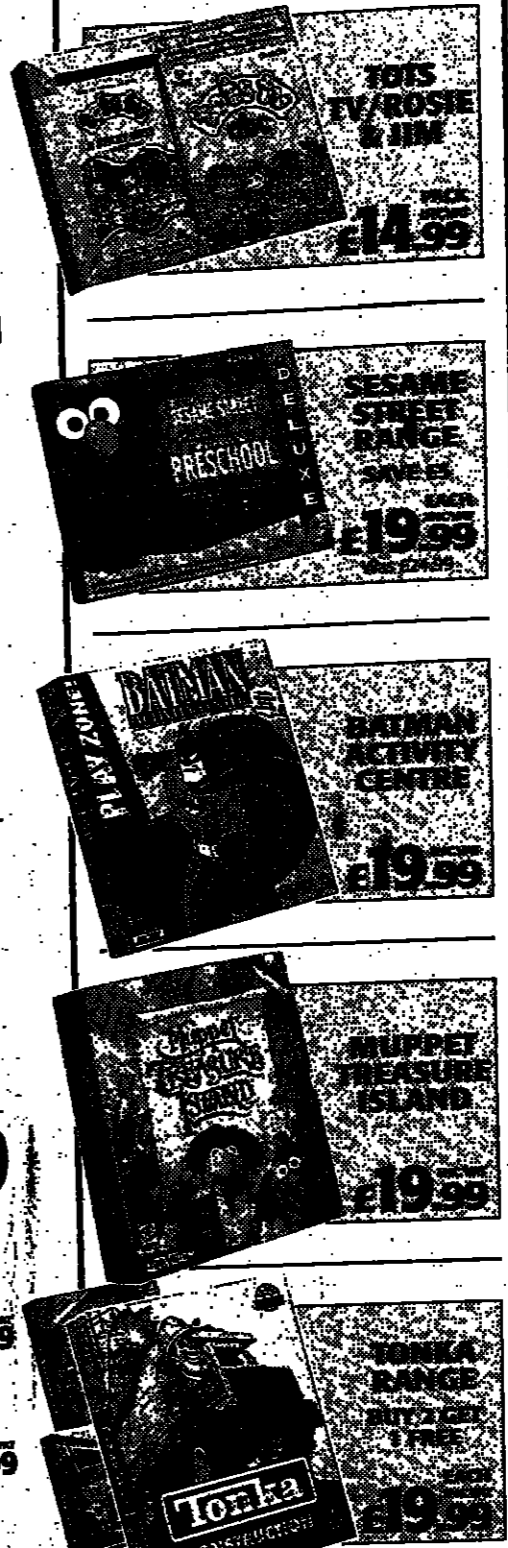
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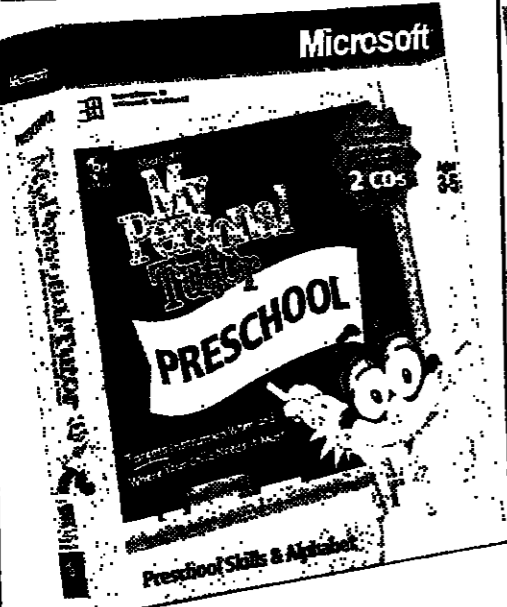
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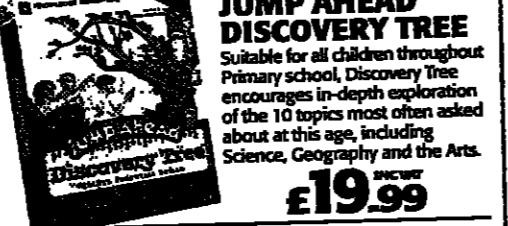
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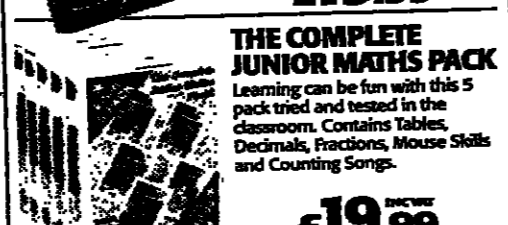
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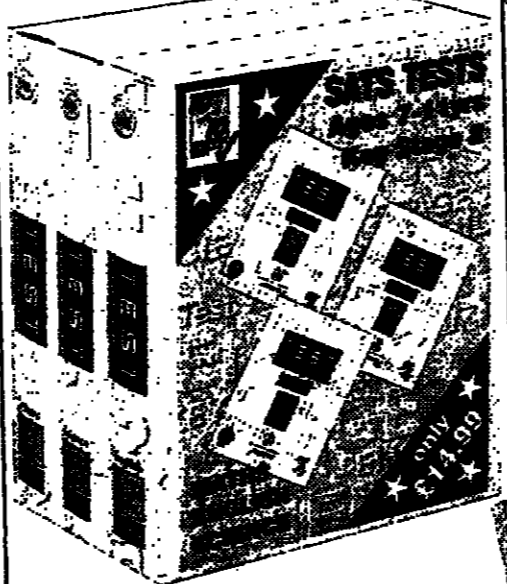
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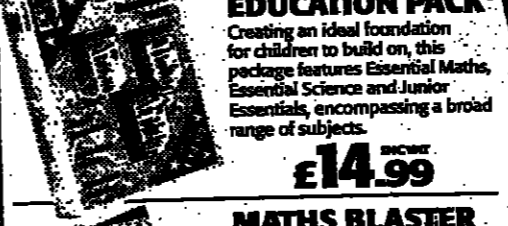
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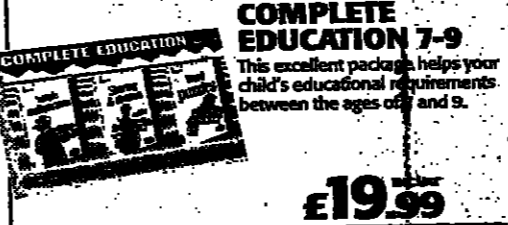
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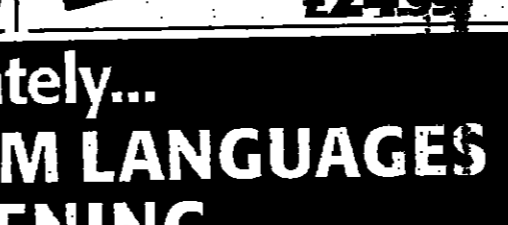
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Lewinsk

Injured caddy sales start for \$155m

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Lewinsky says sex tales 'break my heart'

MONICA LEWINSKY was acutely embarrassed when describing graphic details of her sexual liaisons with President Clinton to the grand jury, but she managed to keep her composure. She was also said to have agonised for months over the prospect of damaging Mr Clinton's reputation. She was quoted as telling a friend: "It's something I never wanted to do. It breaks my heart."

Former trainee did not want to hurt Clinton Ian Brodie reports from Washington

relations with Ms Lewinsky, but according to leaks she told the grand jurors she had numerous sex encounters with him in the White House over a period of 18 months. She was chagrined at having to discuss intensely private matters with a room full of strangers. Sensing the problem, Kenneth Starr, the independent prosecutor, added two women lawyers to his staff in whom she felt comfortable confiding as she was preparing her testimony.

Ms Lewinsky was described as a credible witness, despite an admission on a tape recording by Linda Tripp, her double-crossing friend, that she had "lied my entire life". With Ms Lewinsky's account now on the record, Mr Clinton and his legal team face a terrible dilemma. They could continue to repudiate her and a growing body of physical evidence — though there is still no word on the allegedly semen-stained dress — plus circumstantial evidence from

70 other witnesses who saw Ms Lewinsky in the White House, including Secret Service agents and Mr Clinton's personal secretary, Betty Currie. Mr Clinton's alternative is to admit sexual intimacy, which opens the trap of having committed perjury in his deposition in the Paula Jones case. Perjury in a civil suit may not rank as a major crime; much more serious would be proof that covering up his relationship with Ms Lewinsky amounted to an obstruction of justice. In a new complication yesterday a report claimed that when Bill Richardson, the US Ambassador to the United Nations, offered Ms

Lewinsky a job in New York, he did not have an opening on his staff. The Washington Times, a strongly anti-Clinton newspaper, made a case that the President's aides were frantic to get Ms Lewinsky out of Mr Starr's sights by removing her from Washington. She turned down the offer but then, thanks to Mr Clinton's close friend Vernon Jordan, landed another job in New York with Revlon. It was withdrawn after the scandal broke. No decision has been made on whether Ms Lewinsky will testify again to the grand jury. Mr Starr may wait until Mr Clinton has given his evidence a week on Monday to see if there are any

inconsistencies on which she should be questioned. By September, the grand jury is expected to close down after deciding if any indictments should be issued. Mr Starr has concluded that Mr Clinton cannot be indicted under the Constitution, which stipulates that impeachment by Congress is the remedy for presidential misconduct. If Mr Starr decides he has impeachable evidence he must submit a report on his findings to Congress. The House Judiciary Committee would then hold hearings, to which Ms Lewinsky and others could be called as witnesses, to decide if there were sufficient

grounds for launching impeachment proceedings, leading to a trial of Mr Clinton in the Senate. At present, almost no one on Capitol Hill wants the drama to go that far. That explains why even Republicans have urged Mr Clinton to admit he lied about his sexual life to save his wife and daughter from embarrassment. If he did that, Congress would bend over backwards to avoid impeachment, said Orrin Hatch, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. For now, however, Mr Clinton has shown no sign of accepting the mea culpa option.

Leading article, page 19

Injured caddy sues star for \$155m

By TUNKU VARADARAJAN

A CADDY who alleges that Michael Douglas drove a golf ball into his groin, causing him to lose a testicle, has sued the actor for \$155 million (£94 million) in the Manhattan Federal Court. James Parker, 48, who is black, also claims that Mr Douglas used racially offensive language after the incident, which occurred at the Elmwood Country Club, in Westchester, Connecticut, last October. According to papers filed with the court, the actor sauntered up to the caddy, who was doubled up in pain, and stuffed \$60 into his back pocket. Then he strode away, allegedly muttering: "I can't believe that I hit the nigger in the balls."

First World War soldier hid in cupboard for four years

Ben Macintyre reports on how a Briton found sanctuary behind enemy lines



A sketch of the cupboard in which Private Fowler was concealed from 1915 to 1918

EIGHTY years after the end of the First World War a schoolteacher in northern France has pieced together the remarkable story of a British soldier who survived the entire war behind enemy lines by hiding in a French kitchen cupboard.

In the summer of 1918, Private Patrick Fowler of the 11th Hussars gratefully emerged from an armoire in the village of Bertry, where he had spent the previous four years under the protection of the local villagers, to be reunited with the advancing British Army.

Audiences are flocking to see *Saving Private Ryan*, Steven Spielberg's Second World War blockbuster, but the earlier tale of *Saving Private Fowler* is an altogether darker story of military daring. Even Tom Hanks might find an action movie set in a cupboard a little cramped. "This was one of the strangest episodes of the war," says Jean-Luc Gibot, a teacher and keen local historian who lives near the spot where Private Fowler was hidden. The unlucky trooper was one of several British soldiers who became separated from their regiments during the retreat from Le Cateau in the earliest days of the war, and then found themselves trapped in German-occupied France.

Fowler, then in his 40s, was discovered in August 1914 hiding in a wood by one M Basquin, a resident of Bertry, who handed the fugitive over to his mother-in-law, Marie Belmont-Gobert. Impressively practical as well as courageous, the countrywoman decided that the safest place to stash the soldier during daylight hours was in her cupboard. It was a gloomy refuge. From time to time Fowler would carefully emerge, but at daybreak or when the enemy was about, he returned to his 6 sq ft wooden cell.

At one point in the war German officers were billeted on the Belmont-Goberts but never considered that inside their unwilling hostess's cupboard hid an exceedingly nervous enemy soldier.

According to M Gibot's research, Fowler may have moved his place of refuge to another cupboard in the village



Mme Belmont-Gobert, who hid Private Fowler during the First World War

belonging to Ernest and Euphrasie Caille, which he had to share with the 17-year-old son of the family who was also in hiding to escape forced labour under the Germans. Fowler subsequently appears to have moved back to Mme Belmont-Gobert's roomier hiding place.

Fowler's war was no doubt exceedingly boring but at least, unlike some other soldiers who were rounded up and executed as spies, he was safe.

Some months before the armistice, Major F. V. Drake of the 11th Hussars was riding through liberated territory when he heard a shout: "That's my troop officer." It was Private Fowler, somewhat eccentric after his years of solitary confinement, but otherwise in good health. After the war Private Fowler returned to England and became a steward in the Hussars officer's mess and something of a curiosity.

Mme Belmont-Gobert and her daughter

Angèle were awarded OBEs, but soon fell on hard times and were unable to make ends meet. The army therefore came up the ruse of pretending that Fowler had been technically billeted on the Belmont-Goberts.

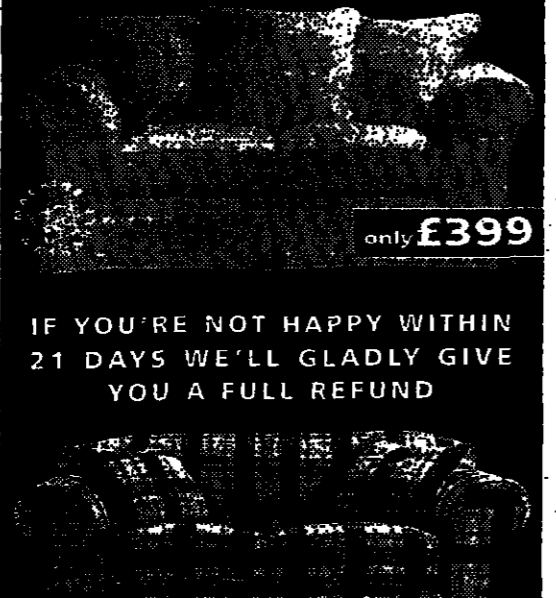
This entitled the family to two pence per every day they had sheltered the soldier, amounting to a staggering Fr2,044 — and 50 centimes — then the equivalent of £1,700 and enough to ensure that the family never went hungry.

The heroic French cupboard also went into glorious retirement. It was purchased from the Belmont-Goberts in the 1920s, as a mark of recognition for their bravery, and remains part of the Imperial War Museum collection on loan to the King's Royal Hussars' Museum in Winchester. Ben Macintyre is writing a book, *Behind the Lines, about First World War soldiers trapped in enemy territory*



The piece went into glorious retirement in the Imperial War Museum collection

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Space apes retire to face life in the lab

By IAN BRODIE

AMERICA'S "astrochimps" were demobbed yesterday but animal rights groups were engaged over their fate. The US Air Force decided most of them would go to a research group that has been accused of causing the deaths of five chimpanzees through negligence. The 14 chimpanzees, with an average age of 27, were members or descendants of Nasa'schimp corps from the early days of the space programme. They include 35 who were subjected to intense G forces inside centrifuges and kept in decompression chambers until they fainted.

The chimps have been leased for the past three years to the Coulston Foundation in New Mexico which will now be given 11 of them. The Department of Agriculture has charged the foundation with 24 violations under the Animal Welfare Act.

Jane Goodall, the renowned chimpanzee researcher, said she was "shocked and saddened" that the air force had awarded the chimps to Coulston. They had been sentenced to a life of "fear, pain and loneliness" in an establishment well known for its inability to care for them, she said.

Ms Goodall and several former astronauts had urged the air force to let the chimps retire to animal sanctuaries rather than subjecting them to further experiments on Alzheimer's, hepatitis, AIDS, arthritis and other diseases.

Belgrade accused of hampering aid effort

FROM TOM WALKER IN PRISTINA

THE United Nations and aid agencies gave a warning yesterday that Kosovo was on the brink of a humanitarian crisis regardless of whether Nato intervenes in the republic to check Serbian advances.

They said Belgrade was so obstructive to relief efforts in Kosovo that an aid operation to save 167,000 ethnic Albanian refugees — the latest UN estimate — is still weeks away. The Serbian Government has also barred agencies, including the Red Cross, from using shortwave radios, equipment essential for the security and efficiency of workers, in the field. Médecins sans Frontières and Oxfam have to rely on UN convoys to stay in touch with their bases in Pristina.

"They're making the life of non-governmental organisations miserable," Mons Nyberg, of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, said. "I don't want to sound pathetic but it's a very difficult situation. It's a humanitarian disaster in the making."

Seasoned aid workers describe Serbia as the most difficult country they have worked in, claiming that the hurdles they face are due to Belgrade's reluctance to help ethnic Albanians rebuild their shattered lives and a communist bureaucracy. Tanjung, the official news agency, has grouped the "so-called humanitarian workers" with the international media who are involved in "a dirty game fabricating stories from refu-

gees, satanising one side to bring in the [Nato] bombs".

The Serbs, meanwhile, have been dropping leaflets on refugees from helicopters, tempting them home with the following instructions: "Go through the free roads. Show up at the police points found on the roads, show up to the first police station. We will help you to arrive safely to your homes and villages."

A UNHCR official who investigated the procedure visited the town of Orahovac where several hundred Albanians returned home over the past week. The mayor explained that young men among the refugees were being asked to call at the police station for "informative talks lasting a few minutes".

The UN officer met an Albanian woman whose husband had not been seen since going to the police the previous day. Her brother was still in bed, recovering from the beating he received during his "informative talks". Mr Nyberg said: "We're certainly not asking people to go back — there's often no way that they can feel safe and secure."

The aid community in Pristina is trying to read into Serbian tactics ahead of the Balkan winter, when they face the prospect of having to shelter up to 70,000 people.

Apart from those displaced within Kosovo, the UNHCR says there are 27,000 Kosovans in Montenegro, and 23,000 in Albania. It also classifies 20,000 Serbs as having fled to Serbia, a figure which is probably much higher and awkward for the Belgrade propaganda effort.



Ethnic Albanians displaced from Kosovo watch the arrival of a humanitarian aid convoy in Lapshevo

WORLD IN BRIEF

Turkish base strikers harass US soldiers

Istanbul: A "siege" imposed by striking workers at Incirlik airbase in southern Turkey, who are demanding a 193 per cent pay increase, is threatening to sour relations between Ankara and Washington (Andrew Finkel writes). The 39th Wing stationed at the base has complained to congressmen in America about physical harassment.

Tyres have been slashed and cars rammed. One US serviceman was beaten while shopping off-base and servicemen now buy their groceries in day-time convoys escorted by Turkish police. General Wes Clark, Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, is so worried that he is said to have considered evacuating dependants.

Vatican chides Netanyahu

Rome: The Vatican reminded Israel that it has the right to name bishops without outside interference, after Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, tried to block the appointment of a Palestinian refugee as Archbishop of Galilee. Mr Netanyahu said that he had discussed the appointment of Burtros Muzalem, now Bishop of Brazil, with Vatican officials because he was concerned about the "politicisation of nominations". (AP)

Militant blacks plan march

New York: A militant black politician has announced a "Million Youth March" in Harlem next month in defiance of New York's mayor, who has refused to grant the radical Muslim group a public rally permit (Tunku Varadarajan writes). Khalid Abdul Muhammad was dismissed as a spokesman for the Nation of Islam in 1994 because of his extreme anti-Semitic views.

Suu Kyi left out of talks

Rangoon: Burma's military Government invited the opposition to talks on the eve of today's 10th anniversary of the army's crackdown on pro-democracy campaigners. The invitation to the National League for Democracy (NLD) excluded Aung San Suu Kyi, the opposition leader, and two other senior party members. The NLD turned down the offer. (Reuters) Letters, page 19

Girl sold for pinball money

Tokyo: Police in the city's Shizuoka area arrested a woman for selling her daughter, 16, to a geisha house so she could play pachinko, a Japanese pinball game. Keiko Ueno, 46, her sister and an elder daughter, 27, were able to borrow a million yen (£4,100). The girl escaped, then alerted police after being beaten by her mother. (Reuters)

Beat goes on as Bolan son revives Glam Rock

The era of T Rex is back, write Alex O'Connell and Adrian Lee

ROLAN BOLAN, the son of the 1970s pop star Marc, is launching his own musical career on the back of a Glam Rock revival which has brought the return of stretch satin jackets and purple feather boas.

heart-throb during the early 1970s. Along with David Bowie, who is believed to be making a film about his alter ego Ziggy Stardust, Bolan was at the forefront of Glam Rock. Nightclubs are cashing in with nights reviving an era of flamboyant excess which few thought could ever be hip again.



Rolan Bolan with a waxwork of his father Marc, who died in 1977, at the Rock Circus in London. Below: The Sweet, a Seventies Glam Rock band



Ewan McGregor in the film Velvet Goldmine

Barney Hoskyns, who has written a history of the era, *Glam! Bowie, Bolan and the Glitter Rock Revolution*, believes the revival has much to do with people reacting against the current bunch of scruffy, uncharismatic pop stars who think dressing up means putting on an anorak.

missed out a lot by losing my father at such an early age. But the warmth was there so much through the music — that's how I kept my relationship with him alive.

Johnnie Davies, of the style magazine *The Face* sees the revival as being linked to the original Glam Rock fans moving into nostalgic middle age: "People are just getting to that age where they are referring back to the people that they were listening to when they were young," he said.



So Rolan Bolan, 23, who lives in Los Angeles, has chosen to kick-start his career at an opportune time. "Even though my dad hasn't been here physically, spiritually he's been here to allow me to grow, through his music and his achievements," he said. "I

NEWS IN BRIEF

250 to sue over birth control implants

At least 250 women who claim to have suffered serious side-effects from the use of a contraceptive implant are to sue the distributors.

Norplant — six thin rubber rods inserted under the skin — provides birth control for up to five years. More than 500 women concerned about the alleged side-effects, which range from depression and paranoia to weight gain and hair loss, have contacted a helpline set up in June by a group of solicitors.

A test case of 10 women against Hoechst Marion Roussel, the suppliers of Norplant in Britain, is expected to be heard on February 1 at the High Court. The company said it would stand by its product.

Trucker jailed

A lorry driver who killed a couple and their daughter when he fell asleep on the M1 was jailed for three years at Northampton Crown Court for causing death by dangerous driving. Joseph Day, 66, from Falkirk, who defied rules on rest breaks, swerved into a car carrying Bill Reid, a pub landlord, his wife Jacqueline and daughter Claire, 14.

Leeson operation

Nick Leeson, the trader whose dealings led to the collapse of Barings Bank, will have an operation in Singapore next week to discover how far his colon cancer has spread. Leeson, who has served two years of his six-year sentence, was moved from the Changi prison hospital to Changi General Hospital, where he is said to be seriously ill.

Fraud inquiry

British Transport Police have made four arrests in connection with an inquiry into fraud and corruption involving rail contracts, one of them a Railtrack employee. The company said he had been suspended while police continued their inquiries. The arrests followed raids earlier this week on eight addresses across the country.

Paracetamol alert

Half a million packs of paracetamol tablets are being recalled because they carry the wrong dosage instructions. About 400,000 of the packs have been delivered to Tesco, the Co-op and Unilever and 100,000 are thought to be in a warehouse. The instructions, which read "children under 12", should say "children aged 6-12".

Greenpeace 'spill'

BP has reported Greenpeace over an alleged two-pint oil spill in the Atlantic. The company told the Department of Trade and Industry that the *MV Greenpeace* left a "sheen" near BP operations 100 miles west of Shetland last month. BP said: "We have a statutory duty to report such things." The department has taken no action so far.

Al Fayed loses

Mohamed Al Fayed's company Liberty Publishing and Media was ordered to pay \$83,000 to the producer Mike Hollingsworth after his dismissal as managing director of Liberty Broadcasting. He had sued for breach of contract in the High Court in London, after the company failed to pay his six-month notice.

Robber bagged

A robber identified by the bags under his eyes was jailed for 11 years at the Old Bailey. Paul Gray, 39, of Watworth, South London, snatched £2,500 at gunpoint from a bank in Greenwich, but was filmed by a security camera peeling off his face mask as he left. He had a dump most of the notes when a dye exploded in the cash bin.

Cameras get to bottom of the Gaul mystery

SOME time this weekend, deep beneath the Barents Sea, a robot submarine will break a glass porthole in the wreck of the *MV Gaul*, one-time pride of the British deep-sea fishing fleet.

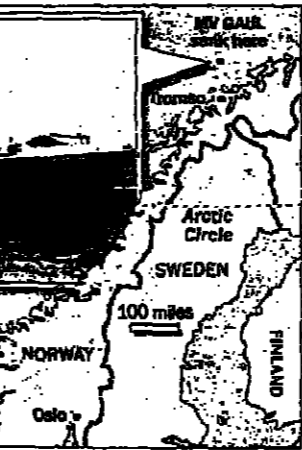
A video camera on a mechanical arm will then be extended inside the hull to examine an accommodation area that has not been seen for almost 25 years.

What the lens relays back to the mother ship, *Mansel 18*, more than 800ft above on the surface, could lay to rest the conspiracy theory surrounding the *Gaul's* sinking in February 1974. Any sign of human remains will scupper stories that the crew were abducted after being caught spying on Soviet naval vessels. The examination of the wreck should also answer claims that the Hull-based *Gaul* was sunk either by a Soviet torpedo or scuttling charges.

When the super-trawler vanished 60 miles off the Norwegian coast in appalling weather, rumour immediately surrounded the fate of one of the largest and most sophisticated factory fishing boats of its time.

Underwater exploration may finally discover why trawler sank, writes Paul Wilkinson

The latest search led by three inspectors from the government's Marine Accident Investigation Branch will endeavour to answer the question of whether the *Gaul's* last voyage was part of that operation. The *Mansel 18* has been chartered by the Environment Department at the direction of John Prescott.



serve the Russians' northern fleet, even though many fishermen have admitted their part in the surveillance and two of the *Gaul's* crew were said to have worked on other vessels involved on intelligence missions.

Then last Monday, only days before *Mansel 18* sailed from Tromsø in Norway to examine the *Gaul's* wreckage, Vice-Admiral Sir Roy Halliday, the Director of Naval Intelligence in the 1970s, admitted the use of trawlers was "widespread".

Until last week, government and military officials consistently denied using Britain's deep-sea trawler fleet to observe the Russians' northern fleet.

Beryl Betts, chairman of the *Gaul* Families Association, said: "I still don't know whether we will get to the truth. We have been told so many lies over the years that we don't have any faith left."

Super-mice refuse to fall into traps

By Paul Wilkinson

THE town mouse is fighting back against the municipal rat catcher. Pest control experts suspect that the pest population of Oldham has evolved into a streetwise super-breed able to avoid the traditional methods of extermination.

Rodent control workers in Oldham are reporting a sudden jump in complaints of mice infestation. In one case the council has refused a request from a mother to be rehoused because they fear the super-mice might move with her and start a new colony.

Les Coop, director of the borough's environmental services, said: "Over the past few years it would appear that a strain of mice has arisen that shows

abnormal behaviour patterns. We now have mice that refuse to go on to traps, that will not eat the usual grain baits that have been successful in the past. This phenomenon is thought to have occurred by intensive rodent control campaigns."

He suggested the "abnormal" mice which survived the treatment regimes bred more of their own kind while the "normal" rodents were wiped out. "This problem only occurs in the town centre, suburban and rural mice still succumb to the traditional control measures."

His staff have made about 20 visits to the home of Claire Banks, 18, who lives with her boyfriend and Daniel, their nine-month-old son, on the town's St Mary's estate. They have tried different techniques, but the mice are still in

residence. Ms Banks' request for a move has so far been rejected.

Mr Coop said: "We will continue to visit the mice until the mice have been eradicated. I cannot give a definite date for completion. Mice are living beings with minds of their own. Controlling them cannot be compared to repairing a roof or repainting a wall with a fixed start and completion date. I am somewhat reluctant to recommend rehousing for this family until the infestation has been cleared up as it is more than likely the infestation would be transferred."

Ms Banks said: "The mice have taken everything thrown at them, but there's no sign of them packing their bags."

Home life. Weekend page 8

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	Unit Rate (per kWh) First 702 units per qtr	6.86p	6.03p	
	Unit Rate (per kWh) Above 702 units per qtr	6.44p	6.03p	
EAST MIDLANDS ELECTRICITY	Quarterly Charge	£8.85	£9.45	5.0%
	Unit Rate (per kWh)	6.70p	6.24p	
LONDON ELECTRICITY	Quarterly Charge	£11.59	£13.13	2.6%
	Unit Rate (per kWh) First 1500 units per qtr	6.42p	6.03p	
	Unit Rate (per kWh) Above 1500 units per qtr	6.33p	6.03p	
MANWEB	Quarterly Charge	£12.13	£13.13	7.5%
	Unit Rate (per kWh)	7.01p	6.26p	
MIDLANDS ELECTRICITY	Quarterly Charge	£7.79	£7.61	4.1%
	Unit Rate (per kWh)	6.72p	6.43p	
NORTHERN ELECTRIC	Quarterly Charge	£11.48	£11.81	9.3%
	Unit Rate (per kWh) First 625 units per qtr	7.42p	6.36p	
	Unit Rate (per kWh) Above 625 units per qtr	6.51p	6.36p	
NORWEB	Quarterly Charge	£9.01	£12.60	4.8%
	Unit Rate (per kWh)	6.73p	5.92p	
SEEBOARD	Quarterly Charge	£0.00	£9.98	3.4%
	Unit Rate (per kWh) First 182 units per qtr	10.40p	6.15p	
	Unit Rate (per kWh) Above 182 units per qtr	6.84p	6.15p	
SOUTHERN ELECTRIC	Quarterly Charge	£9.86	£9.71	4.0%
	Unit Rate (per kWh)	6.53p	6.24p	
SWALEC	Quarterly Charge	£11.55	£11.29	5.0%
	Unit Rate (per kWh)	7.62p	7.20p	
YORKSHIRE ELECTRICITY	Quarterly Charge	£10.50	£11.29	6.1%
	Unit Rate (per kWh)	6.45p	5.88p	

SWEB Working hard to get it right

Minister inquiring the poisons

Babies born with toxic waste still in birth defects

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Ministers order inquiry into the poison tips

MINISTERS have ordered an urgent review of the health risks posed by Britain's 8,000 waste dumps in the light of research showing a greater risk of birth defects.

A list of the 463 hazardous waste dumps thought likely to pose the greatest risk is published today by *The Times*, showing where controlled substances such as pesticides, heavy metals and industrial solvents are believed to be being tipped.

Medical research published yesterday found that the chances of a mother giving birth to a baby with defects rose by a third within two miles of a toxic dump. The incidence of deformities and illnesses such as hole in the heart and spina bifida were all considerably increased in the study of children born to mothers who lived near 21 industrial landfill sites in Europe.

Mike Childs of Friends of the Earth said yesterday that the true list of dangerous British sites might be longer: "Due to poor book-keeping and out-of-date records, a definitive list is impossible. Some landfill sites, classed as taking only household rubbish, may in fact have been used as hazardous waste tips in the past. But this list is the most accurate possible."

The list, compiled by the engineering consultants Aspinwall and Company,

Nick Nuttall reports on the growing concern over hidden perils for children

produces. It must also carry out health surveys around all these sites.

Yesterday it emerged that the Government has ordered surveys to start in the autumn. A spokeswoman for the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions said that the studies were to be carried out by the Small Area Health Statistics Unit at St Mary's Hospital, part of Imperial College, to look at the impact on birth defects.

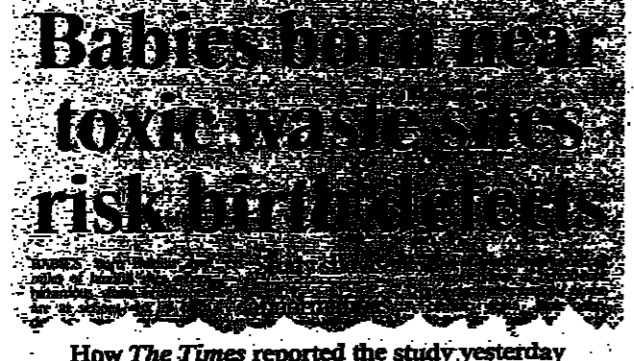
They will cover not only toxic sites but ones used for domestic waste and builders' rubble, after mounting concern by residents that breathing difficulties such as asthma and other illnesses are higher near rubbish tips.

Claire Robinson, of Action to Reduce and Recycle Our Waste, a group of residents in Skelmersdale, Lancashire, welcomed the announcement. The town is ringed by ten tips that take rubbish from Manchester and Merseyside. The campaigners are trying to block a further one, planned by UK Waste, that will be less than 200 metres from a school. Ms Robinson said that residents living near the tips complained of asthma and vomiting.

Janet Manning-Shaw of the Environmental Services Association, which represents landfill operators, said that the new findings linking hazardous tips with birth defects should not be dismissed, but should not be blown up out of proportion. "The authors clearly state that the study does not establish a causal link."

She said that nearly half the tips in the study began operating 20 years ago, since when laws had been strengthened and there had been improvements in technology to make sites safer.

□ *Toxic Tips*, a guide to waste dumps, can be obtained from Friends of the Earth, 26-28 Underwood St, London N1 7JQ.



How *The Times* reported the study yesterday

BRITAIN: A LAND OF BURIED DANGERS

AVON
Avonmouth, Bristol (4 sites); Aust, Bristol; Cothampton, Bristol; Weston in Gordale; Clevedon; Long Ashton, Bristol; Long Ashton, Bristol; Weston, Bristol; Avonmouth, Bristol

BEDFORDSHIRE
Arlesey; Sawtery; Bedford; Brogborough, Bedford

BERKSHIRE
Theale; Thatcham; Newbury; Hurst; Reading; Henley; Newbury; Colnbrook; Slough; Poole; Slough; Burnham; Slough; Fulmer; Slough; Beaisham; Reading; Burghfield; Reading

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
Bletchley; Milton Keynes; Buckingham; Chesham; Gerrards Cross; Calvert, Buckingham

CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Barrington; Buckden; Huntingdon; Eye; Peterborough; Dagsboro; Peterborough; Milton; Cambridge; Wilburton; Ely; Wansford; Peterborough; Buckden; Huntingdon; Warboys; Huntingdon

CHESHIRE
Sandbach; Helsby; Warrington; Warrington; Warrington; Warrington (3 sites); Middlewich; Northwich; Chester; Crewe; Risley; Warrington; Southwich; Oldham; Kendal; Warrington (2 sites); Cheshire; Church Minshull; Nantwich; Cheshire

CLEVELAND
Middlesbrough (3 sites); South Bank; Middlesbrough (2 sites); Billingham; Grangtown; Middlesbrough; Eaglescliffe; Stockton; Hartlepool; Greatham; Hartlepool; Gaisborough (2 sites)

CORNWALL
St Day; Redruth; Liskeard (2 sites); Landrake; Saltash; Bude; CLUMBRIA; Sausale (2 sites); Whitehead; Barrow in Furness; Asperia; Carlisle; Dalton; Carlisle; Kendal; Warrington (2 sites); Southwell; Carlisle

DERBYSHIRE
Clay Cross; Chesterfield; Derby; Cich; Maltby; Horsley; Derby; Stanton by Dale; Heaston; Bradwell; Sheffield; Chesterfield; Birmington; Chesterfield; Szevelly; Chesterfield; Newhall; Swadlow; Bolsover; Chesterfield; Sneinton; Ashbourne; Ewaston; Derby; Derby

DEVON
Copplesstone; Crediton; Kingsleigh; Newton Abbot (2 sites); Otwell; Honiton; Lynton; Plymouth; Torrington; Holesworthy; Bideford; Bidestone; Okehampton

DORSET
Wormwell; Dorchester; Poole; Wareham; Weymouth; Dorchester

GL. DURHAM
Bishop Auckland; Coxhoe; Durham (2 sites); Cockfield; Bishop Auckland; Newton Aycliffe; Newfield; Bishop Auckland; Chester Le Street; Birtley; Chester Le Street

EAST SUSSEX
Lewes; St Leonards; Hastings

ESSEX
Basildon; South Ockendon; Tilbury; Rainham (2 sites); Stanford le Hope; Rainham

GLOUCESTERSHIRE
Hempstead; Stoke Orchard; Cheltenham; Lydney; Bishop Cleeve; Cheltenham

HANTS
Lisieux; Friends of the Earth

HAMPSHIRE
Overton; Basingstoke (2 sites); Hursley; Basingstoke; Whitechurch; Basingstoke; Hazeley (2 sites); Basingstoke; Fawley (2 sites); Ringwood; Portsmouth; Kings Somborne; Stockbridge; Wickham; Fareham; Romsey

HERTFORDSHIRE
Much Hadham; Hemel Hempstead; Ware

HUMBERSIDE
Barton Upon Humber; South Willingham; Messingham; Southcoates; Scunthorpe; Grimsby; Raby; Scunthorpe; Scunthorpe (2 sites); Great Coates; Grimsby; Immingham; Grimsby; Winterton; Scunthorpe; Scunthorpe; Newport

KENT
Isle of Grain; Rochester; Canterbury; Swanscombe; Sandwich; Higham; Rochester; Isle of Grain; Rochester; Hoo; Rochester; Longfield; Sittingbourne; Orham; West Malling; Borough Green; Sevenoaks

LEICESTERSHIRE
Lount; Ashby de la Zouche; Harborough; Leicester; Leicester; Enderby; Leicester; Melton Mowbray; Huncote; Leicester; Shawel; Lutterworth

LINCOLNSHIRE
North Hykeham; Lincoln; Lincoln (3 sites); Boston; Gainsborough; Louth; Kirby on Ham; Woodhall Spa; Leadenham; Lincoln; Middlemarsh; Skegness; Stainby; Grantham; North Hykeham; Lincoln; Colsterworth; Grantham

LANCASHIRE
Horwich; Bolton; Bury; New Hey; Rochdale; Wigan; Withnell; Chorley; Darwen; Burnley (3 sites); Church; Accrington; White Le Woods; Chorley; Leyland; Preston; Freckleton; Preston; Clayton le Woods; Accrington; Alham; Accrington; Rishton; Blackburn; Lancaster; Catterick; Bacup; Rawtenstall; Rossendale; Much Hoole; Preston; Skelmersdale (2 sites); Thornton; Thornton Cleveleys; Fleetwood

GREATER MANCHESTER
Swinton; Manchester; Mossley; Ashton Under Lyne; Trafford Park; Manchester

NORFOLK
Thorpe; Norwich; Attlebridge; Norwich; Frestonham; Norwich; Docking; Kings Lynn; Feltwell; Thetford; Holt; Aylsham; Botesford; Suffolke; Cosnesay; Norwich

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
Brighthelm; Northampton; Corby (2 sites); Weldon; Corby; Welford; Northampton; Coad Ashby; Northampton; Kibby; Rugby; Ruzton; Kettering; Towcester; Courtenhill; Northampton; Road; Northampton; Wellingborough (2 sites)

NORTHUMBRIA
Ashington; Lynemouth; Morpeth

NORTH YORKSHIRE
Shepton; Darlington; Pontefract; Chillingham; Knottingley; Seamer; Scarborough; Manton; Hullam; Leeds; Knottingley; Kirk Streaton; Pontefract; Eccle; York; Micklety; Settham by the Sea; Pickering; West Tharfield; Ripon; Rufforth; York; Richmond; Skipton; Harworth; Doncaster

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Worksop; Bramcote; Nottingham; Arnold; Nottingham (2 sites); Southwell; Retford; Sear, Nottingham; Bury; Nottingham; Barnstone; Nottingham

OXFORDSHIRE
Sutton Courtenay; Abingdon; Andley; Bicester; Glympton; Woodstock; Stanton Harcourt; Winney; Benson; Wallingford; Banbury; Ewelme; Wallingford; Abingdon; Radley; Abingdon

SHROPSHIRE
Telford (3 sites); Crose Houses; Shrewsbury; Press; Whitechurch; Bridgnorth; Ellesmere; Little Wenlock; Telford

SOMERSET
Stogursey; Bridgewater; Castle Cary; Pawlett; Bridgwater; Williton; Taunton

SOUTH YORKSHIRE
Penistone; Sheffield; Doncaster; Bawtry; Doncaster (2 sites); Spratborough; Doncaster; Finningley; Doncaster; Doncaster; Kirk Sandall; Doncaster; Warmsworth; Doncaster; Hatfield; Doncaster; Rotherham; Kiveton Park; Sheffield; Sheffield (2 sites); Woodhouse; Sheffield; Shirecliffe; Sheffield; Sheffield

STAFFORDSHIRE
Stoke on Trent; Rugeley; Marchington; Uttoxeter; Stone; Burton Under Newwood; Alrewas; Burton upon Trent; Little Wyrley; Walsall; Cannock

SUFFOLK
Brightwell; Ipswich; Laxfield; Bury St Edmunds; Wetherden; Stowmarket; Great Blakenham; Ipswich; Southwold; Bungay; Ash; Aldershot; Haze

SURREY
Albury; Guildford; Redhill; Thorpe; Egham; Runfold; Farnham; Ryton; Tye & Wear; Gatshhead; Tye & Wear; Dinnington; Newcastle upon Tye; Houghton le Spring; Tye & Wear; Gatshhead; Tye & Wear

WARWICKSHIRE
Kisby; Nuneaton; Rugby; Ufton; Leamington Spa

WEST MIDLANDS
Morden; Coventry; Westbury; Tipton; West Bromwich; Warley; Solihull; Darlaston; Westbury; Walsall Wood; Walsall; Bilton; Himley; Dudley

WEST SUSSEX
Washington; Pulborough; Small Dole; Henfield

WEST YORKSHIRE
Hasworth; Keighley; Thornton; Bradford; Halifax; Todmorden; Lanes; Huddersfield; Dewsbury; Metham; Huddersfield; Morley; Leeds; Leeds; Morley; Garforth; Leeds; Normanston; Castleford

WILTSHIRE
Purton; Swindon; Compton Bassett; Redlynch; Salisbury; Westbury

STAFFORDSHIRE
Fenton; Stoke on Trent; Alrewas; Burton upon Trent; Staffs; Stoke on Trent; Dosthill; Tamworth; Sutton Colfield; W Mids; Taddington; Derby; Kilhampton; Sheffield; S Torks; Birch Vale; Stockport; Cheshire; Grotty; Laics

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Rampton; Retford; Retford; Bilsthorpe; Newark; Sutton in Ashfield; Middlesbrough; Cleveland; Newfield; Bishop Auckland; Co Durham; Kirk Smeaton; Pontefract; W York; Greenisle; Ryton; Tye & Wear; Holme on Spalding Moor; York; N York; North Humberside; Brough; Leeds

SOUTH YORKSHIRE
Rotherham (two sites); Spratbrough; Doncaster; Eland; W York; Cumbria; Workington; Todhills; Carlisle; Barrow in Furness; Newbiggin; Penrith

WEST SUSSEX
Bognor Regis; Warrnam; Horsham; West Sussex; Worthing; Bognor; Blundston St Andrew; Swindon; Wits

WORCESTERSHIRE
Bromsgrove (2 sites); Wye Piddle; Pershore; Hartlebury; Kidderminster; Kidderminster; Bewdley; Stourport

SCOTLAND
Shapinsay; Orkney Islands; Western Isles; Benbecula; Caithness; Isle of Barra; Falkirk; Stirling; Dumfries; Dumfriesshire; Freuchie; Cupar; Fife; Fort William; Highland reg; Kirkcaldy; Edinburgh; Fife; Perth; Perthshire; Pumphreyston; Livingston; Beth; Ayrshire; Glasgow; Dunip; Kilmarnock; Ayrshire; Ardrie; Lanarkshire; Methven; Forfar; Angus; Glenargy; Perth; Perthshire; BO'ness; Westwood; Dunfermline; Fife; Stirling; Stirlingshire; Angus; Forfar; Wellbank; Doncaster; Perth; Perthshire; Tulliemess; Orkney; Orkney Islands; Stormroy; Isle of Lewis; Inverness; Portree; Isle of Skye; Bowermadden; Wick; Caithness; Kilmochewen; Argyll; Argyllshire; Aberdeen; Blyth; Dorn; Dalbeattie; Kirkcaldy; Greenhills; Ardrie; Lanarkshire; Dalry; Ayrshire

WALES
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How crony became a dirty word

THE Tory historian Lord Blake was the first to coin the soundbite "Tony crony", when he wrote about the appointment of the Queen's spin-doctor, Simon Lewis.

The 81-year-old constitutional expert pointed out in a newspaper column on June 24 that Mr Lewis counted both Peter Mandelson and Sarah Macaulay, Gordon Brown's girlfriend, among his close friends. Mr Lewis's wife, he said, was a close friend of Cherie Blair and their children went to the same school in Islington. "In short, Mr Lewis might reasonably be called a Tony crony..."

Two weeks later, William Hague spoke about "the culture of cronyism" in an attack on the Government's controversial links with lobbyists. Ever since, Tory MPs have been celebrating its emergence as the defining political term of the parliamentary session.

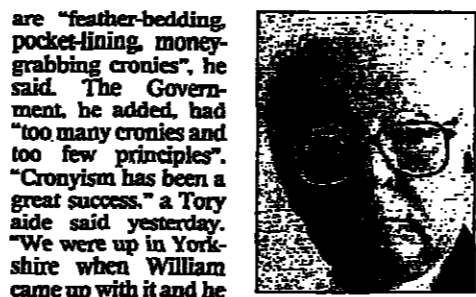
In the four weeks since July 6, when Mr Hague used the word, it has appeared some 132 times in national newspapers. Over the previous three years, it had been used on only 200 occasions, most fre-

quently in descriptions of American or Third World politics. It was on the morning of Monday July 6, the day after the "lobbygate" scandal broke, that Mr Hague decided to dust cronyism down and use it against the Government. Still under the weather from sinusitis, the Tory leader was writing a speech with officials in his Yorkshire home when inspiration came.

He had used the word before to attack Labour councils and Welsh MPs but never in a deliberately systematic way. So, in a speech later that night, Mr Hague tried the term out on Buxton Tories, and they loved it. "There is a culture of cronyism at the heart of this Government which is distinctly unpleasant," he told them.

It worked so well that Central Office ensured that the phrase was deployed by all their MPs up and down the country, but it was Mr Hague's repetition of the word ten times during Prime Minister's Questions on July 8 which secured its place in the headlines. Mr Blair should "tackle the culture of cronyism", not "protect his cronies", who

The term which used to mean friend is now an effective soundbite for Labour's political enemies, says James Landale



Blake coined "Tony crony"

are "feather-bedding, pocket-lining, money-grabbing cronies", he said. The Government, he added, had "too many cronies and too few principles".

"Cronyism has been a great success," a Tory aide said yesterday. "We were up in Yorkshire when William came up with it and he used it in a speech later that night. It went down well and we carried on from there. You know when a phrase is devastating it even Labour MPs use it."

In the slang of political advisers, the term "cronies" means it can be used for more than one issue and express a general view of an

opponent. In the same way the Tories were attacked for "sleaze". Labour is accused of "cronyism" for almost everything it does.

The appointment of Baroness Young of Old Scone, the Labour peer, to be vice-chairman of the BBC, raised shouts of cronyism. Ironically, Gail Rebuck, chairman of Random House, failed to get the job because she too was accused of being one of "Tony's Cronies" — her husband, Philip Gould, is a close member of the inner circle at Downing Street. Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, has been accused of being "Tony's

Crony" for becoming too close to the Prime Minister. In a variation on a theme, the death of media mogul Tiny Rowland led one acquaintance to say that Louro was a medieval court "run by Tiny's cronies".

Mr Blair's entire ministerial reshuffle was criticised as an exercise in cronyism. Both Margaret Hodge, a former neighbour of the Blairs, and Lord Falconer, a long-standing friend, were promoted. Michael Ancram, the Tory deputy chairman, said: "This reshuffle has shown quite dramatically that the culture of cronyism is alive and well in the Government."

This week's appointment of Gus Macdonald, the media baron who is neither an MP nor a peer, as Scottish Office minister prompted howls of cronyism with even Labour MPs joining in. Tam Dalyell, the veteran MP for Linlithgow, said: "It is hardly surprising that more and more people are accusing the Labour party of cronyism." Mr Macdonald denied both membership of Labour or an intimate relationship with Tony Blair. "I

think cronyism is the buzz word of the last month or two."

Helen Wilkinson, co-founder of Demos, the most new Labour of think-tanks, disagrees, writing in the *New Statesman*: "The culture of cronyism appears to be permeating Government, spreading tentacle-like a job here, a job there."

Like most words, the precise origin of crony is disputed. Earliest references source the word as 17th century Cambridge University slang for a friend — Oxford's contemporary slang was "chum".

Crony first appeared in print in Samuel Pepys's 1665 diaries when he described a friend as a "crony". There might be a link to the Greek word *chronos* meaning long-continued, implying that a crony is a long-time friend. But this is disputed, with some scholars claiming that Pepys added the erroneous, extra H to show off his classical education.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* now describes cronyism as "the appointment of friends to government posts without proper regard to their qualifications".



Ron Davies proud to become a Druid

Davies enters another arcane circle

RON DAVIES, already a member of Tony Blair's inner circle, was yesterday admitted to an even more august body. The Welsh Secretary took his place as a fully-fledged Druid at the National Eisteddfod, the annual celebration of Welsh culture and tradition.

After a solemn procession to a ring of standing stones at Bridgend, Glamorgan, Mr Davies was officially admitted into the Gorsedd of Bards, the Eisteddfod's ruling body. Dressed in long white robes and a flowing head-dress, he was hard to pick out from 27 other, similarly garbed, newcomers.

They were presented to Archdruid Dafydd Rowlands, who presided at the 200-year-old ceremony. Harpists blew fanfares, a harpist played and flower girls danced in a ritual more artistic and colourful than most of the parliamentary customs Mr Davies is used to.

Eisteddfod officials spoke only in Welsh, making no concessions to the fact that the Welsh Secretary is not fluent — although he is an enthusiastic student.

Politicians are rarely recruited into the celebrated band of poets, musicians, writers and artists of the Celtic tradition.

But Mr Davies was praised for his work on the Government's devolution plans. He had played "a determined role at a crucial period in the history of Wales", said an official Eisteddfod citation.

The official bardic title — which is not hereditary — for Mr Davies, the member for Caerphilly, who comes from Machen, a village in his constituency is to be *Ron o Vachen* (translation: Ron of Machen).

Photograph, page 28

Hong Kong voting 'flawed'

By POLLY NEWTON, POLITICAL REPORTER

THE electoral system imposed by China on Hong Kong is "fundamentally flawed", a committee of MPs said yesterday.

The Commons Foreign Affairs Committee said that Hong Kong's Legislative Council did not reflect the will of the people. Arrangements introduced when China regained control of the former British colony last year meant that results in 40 of the 60 council seats were decided by fewer than 140,000 voters of a registered electorate of 2.8 million. There are various kinds of constituency, with 30 "functional" seats representing different sectors of the economy. When corporate voting was restored in 20 of them the number of electors registered in functional constituencies fell to about 11,000.

The MPs called for council elections to be solely by universal suffrage. Under present arrangements, this could not happen until 2008, which was "too distant: Hong Kong's long-term economic progress is in our view dependent on the strengthening of democracy and the maintenance of the rule of law."

They praised China for allowing the right to protest in Hong Kong: "... the actions of the police and the civil authorities do not appear to have altered since the handover."

Who wins when old pals act together?

Michael Gove seeks a victor in the deal on Gus MacDonald's new job

FOR new Labour, cronyism, like the United Kingdom, works both ways. But, like the Union, one partner gets more out of it than the other. When the Scottish Secretary, Donald Dewar, introduced Gus Macdonald as his new Industry Minister this week it was seen as a bolstering of his beleaguered team.

In Labour's grudge match against the SNP Mr Dewar seemed to have acquired a heavyweight striker on a free transfer. But insiders from Mr Macdonald's old company, the Scottish Media Group, believe that the real winner is

Mr Macdonald. They argue he has found a perfect escape route from a company which has lost its way. Those who know the Scottish Labour Party fear that Mr Macdonald may not find it as easy to score in his new role as his old.

Mr Macdonald's journey to the House of Lords began in the shipyards of Govan but it was while at Scottish Television that he broke into the establishment.

When he joined Scottish Television from Granada in 1985 he was moving from ITV's premier division to its amateur league. STV was seen



Gus Macdonald in Scottish Television days on the children's show, Funhouse. Critics say he has made himself a winner by joining government

as the country cousin of British broadcasting, elbowing its way on to the network at Hogmanay and then keeping Andy Stewart's kilt in mothballs for the rest of the year. Macdonald pledged to get rid of the "tartan and hay bales". He was as good as his word,

producing network hits such as *Taggart*, investigative journalism which led to the prosecution of alleged war criminals and broadcasting which reflected the full diversity of Scottish culture and society. In the words of one executive recruited at the time,

it was "intelligently populist, a lively commercial interpretation of public service broadcasting".

The high-water mark of Mr Macdonald's success was the retention of the central Scotland ITV franchise for just £2,000. The board meeting which agreed the bid took hours to authorise such a bid. But the main point of discussion was not the likelihood of being outbid — Mr Macdonald knew his quality output had scared all competitors off. The debate centred on whether or not the Broadcasting Act's insistence on bids being made in multiples of a thousand pounds would allow a bidder to interpret "one" as a multiple. In the end the board played it safe by multiplying their first thought by two.

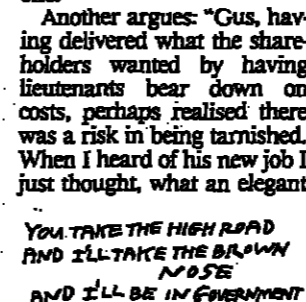
Wrangling over a thousand pounds might seem misplaced parsimony but it is nothing compared to attitudes towards costs within the company over recent years, according to insiders. On his way to the chairmanship of the company, a process which has been accompanied by the acquisition of Grampian Television, the *Glasgow Herald* and *Evening Times*, and a new name, the Scottish Media Group, Mr Macdonald has presided over what one broadcaster calls a "bonfire of quality".

A succession of senior current affairs executives have been dispensed with, one leaving in protest at allegedly inadequate preparations for televising of the Scottish parliament. The producer, Noel Dolan, said the plans were a

"travesty" and his criticisms have been echoed by others who know SMG.

"The output is the bare minimum necessary to hang on to their contract, and TV is managed by a man who is an ideas-free zone," according to one.

Another argues: "Gus, having delivered what the shareholders wanted by having lieutenants bear down on costs, perhaps realised there was a risk in being tarnished. When I heard of his new job I just thought, what an elegant



YOU TAKE THE HIGH ROAD AND I'LL TAKE THE BLOW... AND I'LL BE IN GOVERNMENT BEFORE THREE... I DON'T THINK SO!

exit". An SMG insider believes Mr Macdonald was already planning his exit last year when he expressed concern that the pro-devolution campaign was not doing as well as it might in the midst of the referendum campaign.

The implication is clear — he was already building bridges to government.

Now that the escape has been made, though, there are Labour figures who feel he may have jumped from the frying pan into a nationalistic bonfire. "Gus can hardly, in this climate, make much of a difference to industry in a nine months before the elections to the Scottish parliament."

"I suspect that his real role will be bashing the Nats."

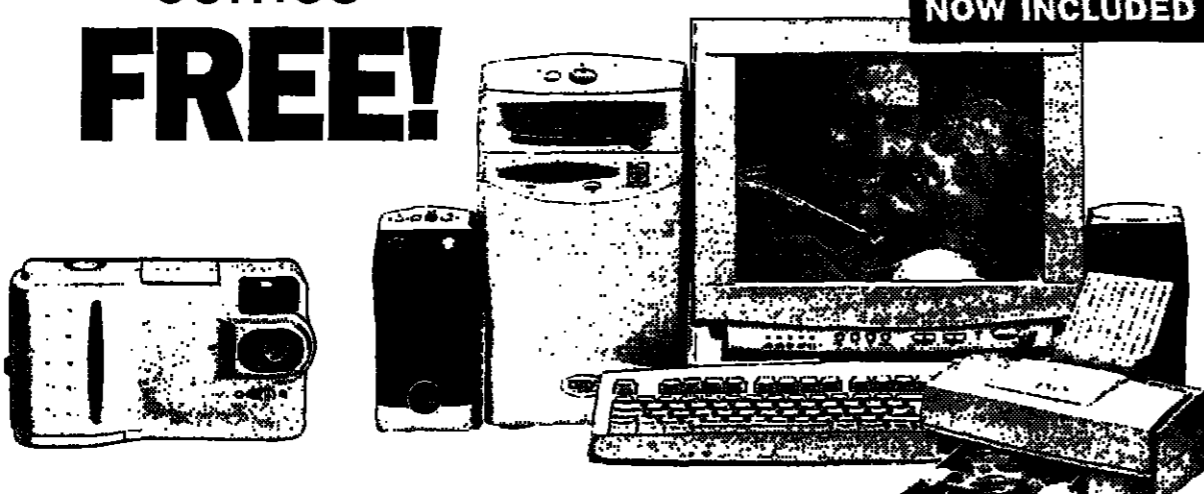
Yet, according to a former colleague, he is not equipped to carry the fight to the enemy. "Gus is of a generation which really does dislike nationalism" he argues, "but there is an arrogance to him, and a lack of political experience which means he won't be able to better the nationalists in debate."

Mr Macdonald is a skilled performer, as any of the guests he grilled on Channel Four's *Right to Reply* will remember. But he may be more likely now to operate in the backrooms. As one former colleague explains: "He will no doubt be using his skills as a wordsmith and strategist to sharpen campaigning."

Another broadcaster believes Mr Macdonald will try to build a new network, just as he built his old company. "I suspect he will bring together a group of credible, non-Tory, business types to discredit the nationalists' economic agenda."

Mr Macdonald is well equipped for such a role but he will, no doubt, be aware that the nationalists may point to his old company as an example of what can happen when business imperatives are seen to be more important than keeping the cultural flag flying.

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BRADFORD OPENS TODAY

Byers warns boardroom pay hikes could cost jobs

By JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

STEPHEN BYERS, the new Chief Secretary to the Treasury, yesterday called for an end to big boardroom pay increases, warning that they could cause job losses and higher mortgages.

Mr Byers, making his first major speech since he was promoted to the Cabinet last week, said both the public and private sectors must help to curb pay rises.

"All of us starting from the boardroom onwards must now show the responsibility that the country needs," Mr Byers told Labour Party members in London. "It must be the worst of short-termism to pay ourselves more today at the cost of higher interest rates, fewer jobs and slower growth tomorrow."

Mr Byers' comments follow a survey of executive pay which showed senior directors in the UK's 350 largest listed

companies had received increases that averaged 17.8 per cent. It also coincides with reports that Gordon Brown expects the Cabinet to forgo their £16,000 pay rises for a further three years.

Asked about Cabinet pay in an interview on Radio 4, Mr Byers said ministers were forgoing the rises this year. The former School Standards Minister would not be drawn on future salaries.

"We'll decide, I think, some time in the autumn what the increase should be for next year," he said.

In his speech last night Mr Byers strongly defended the Government's economic policy and its decision to give the Bank of England the power to set interest rates, insisting that low inflation was the key to stability.

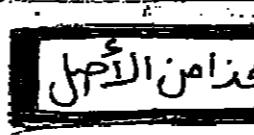
"I believe the new system has already given greater

credibility to monetary policy making. When we came to office inflation was heading way beyond its target and we had to act. Because of the action taken — difficult as it is — I am now confident that the economy is... back on track for stability and sustainable levels of growth," he said.

He denied the Government was sitting back and watching businesses go down the pan as they struggled to compete with high interest and exchange rates.

"There is no trade-off between low inflation, jobs, investment and growth. They go together," he said.

He also challenged the Tories to say whether they would reverse the Bank of England's independence, what interest rate they would set, and whether they agreed on higher spending for education and health.



Why we will never forgive him for ruining our summer with that fractious little kick

Simon Barnes analyses why football's fallen star is facing a humiliating season in hell



And so begins a season in Hell. Football cocks its annual snook at the British summer tomorrow...

Can you remember, slightly lost it one evening, and aimed a wild throw-high king-fu kick at a member of the crowd? In style, after all, c'est l'homme.



The Famous Last Kick that reduced England to ten men



A sarong-clad Beckham, with girlfriend, before The Fall

free kick and to show the yellow card to his assailant. Beckham, still prone, then did a very foolish thing. He launched that fractious little kick at Simeone.

doubt he would have taken his penalty and scored with a wicked shimmy or an audacious lofted ball into the net's roof. But he was gone, attempting to purge his sins in the early bath, and the country's footballing followers were preparing the recriminations they would heap upon him once the domestic season began.



Whatever his notoriety with those who hate Manchester United, the club's fans showed at the training ground yesterday that they still loved Beckham

footballing round. There is no home defeat of your own favoured club that cannot be eased by learning of a misfortune in Manchester. "Not a bad result," someone told me after the World Cup.

When there's Beckham himself young, flash, self-consciously handsome, a sponsor's dream and consequently rich beyond belief.

Eleven: Zoe Ball's Football Dream Team, subtitled The Beautiful Game's Most Beautiful Boys.

convert Beckham from pop icon to hate-object. For it is not as if Beckham were that archetype of sporting life, the loveable bad boy; a Best, a Botham, one of those people who trade on their power to induce serial forgiveness.

ham faces a season of vituperation, for football supporters feel they have a right to inflict such things on those they pay to watch.

STAY AWAY FROM NIGHTCLUBS AND THAT STUPID SARONG

BY STEPHEN FARRELL. What I would say to him in PR terms is keep quiet. Stay away from nightclubs and don't get your picture taken in that bloody stupid sarong.

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Falling stars in a culinary firmament

Michelin's accolade is no guarantee against failure, says Ben Macintyre

Irritating statement: This week it was my duty as your columnist to dine in a Parisian restaurant boasting three Michelin stars. More irritating statement: I am now going to complain about it. This is not to say that the food was anything less than utterly delicious. The soup tasted of chilled heaven; the "gambas" had died, as the plaques have it, "pour la gloire de la France" and had received their reward on a bed of tiny vegetables belonging to rare and endangered species; the Chateaubriand would have made the "vicomte" proud; the "milles-feuilles" were at the very least "milles-feuilles". The bill was staggering.

In these respects there was everything one could have wanted from a classic French meal and yet the experience, as on the very few other occasions I have dared to visit a tristar establishment, was distinctly uncomfortable. To join the club of restaurants worthy of three Michelin stars (currently 21) requires not just sublime food, but an entire over-the-top performance that can leave some diners feeling as if they have accidentally stumbled on to the set of a particularly extravagant opera, or a cathedral in which some complicated, secret and solemn rite is under way.

Eating three-star food has become strangely stressful

An army of waiters, one to each paying mouth in some restaurants, stands alert should the level of your glass fall the 1.5cm requiring an instant refill; a fresh napkin, perfectly ironed by some mad geometrical pedant in the back, flutters down with each course. The leather-bound wine list is the size of an ancestral family bible, but slightly less readable.

Brillat-Savarin, the great 18th-century gastronomic sage who knew his onions better than any other before or since, wrote in *Meditations on Taste* that "eating is the only pleasure which, taken in moderation, need not be followed by fatigue". The trappings surrounding three-star French food have become so immoderate that eating it has become strangely stressful, like sitting a gastronomic viva.

Someone has lovingly stamped the name of the restaurant into the butter. If you actually eat some butter, the dish is discreetly removed, re-engraved and returned. I dropped a roll (sorry, a perfect "haïku" in bread), and it was whisked away by a man in gloves, no doubt to be humanely destroyed in the back. The other diners stared. I felt, bizarrely, guilty.

Brillat-Savarin believed in "the art of eating", but it was not, for him, a high or exclusive art, needing to be expensive and over-wrought before it could be considered good. He often enthused over a humble value-for-money spread, such as that at the humble Silver Lion Inn in Lausanne, where he paid "3 francs 25 centimes for three meals including some healthy mountain venison, excellent Geneva lake fish and a limpid little white wine that would have made a madman drink." Above all, however, the great gourmand enjoyed the relaxed surroundings, where everyone "made himself at home".

There are even signs that Michelin is beginning to bend, for one of the newest three-star appointees is *L'Arpège*, an establishment said to have all the gastronomic clout of its peers but little of the stuffiness.

Of course, as a newly self-appointed arbiter in these matters, keeping track of the subtle shifts in the upper echelons of haute cuisine is going to require a lot of work on my part. This is a cross I shall just have to bear, which means that while I may not always agree with the Michelin Man, I am soon going to look like him.



Straight and narrow

Homosexuals should seek a church which offers more generous love

This has been a bad week for homosexuals. They have been declared unmarriageable, unsuitable as soldiers, impossible as priests and unfit for sex at 16. They have fallen foul of the Church of England, the House of Lords, the Army and even the *New Statesman*. A lower age of consent, said a former Chief Rabbi, "would open the gates of suffering". A bishop roared that homosexuals would "go to Hell". The *Statesman's* deputy editor pleaded that all sex under 18 should be outlawed. As for the doomed House of Lords, it shouted its defiance of the Commons on age of consent and invited a constitutional duel.

What should the rest of us make of these goings on? Need we care? Homosexuals have achieved legal and social acceptability during the past quarter century. They have pleaded the privacy of sexual relations, and been granted it. As Jeremy Bentham said, homosexuality was a curious crime, "that produces no misery in society". Most homosexuals of my acquaintance live lives of quiet dignity. They acknowledge that their private life is different from that of most people. They do not brazen their proclivity in speech, dress or behaviour, since they know that others can find it upsetting. But they refuse to deny their relationships for what they are, a bond of love enshrined in cohabitation. I am not Tiresias, "who has seen all". But when people whom I respect assert the power of homosexual law, I will not legislate against them. It is a low test in a fight that few heterosexuals can know. Without the added bond of children, its intensity should be respected, even envied.

Which brings us back to this week's shenanigans. With the age of consent I have no problem. The desire to protect young people from exploitation is understandable, yet there is no more inept protection than the criminal law. Ask any parent of teenagers. Nor can I understand how peers can happily escort teenage daughters down the aisle to matrimony, yet say to their teenage sons that they "cannot know their sexuality". The idea of allowing one form of sex yet banning another for 16 and 17-year-olds is simply ludicrous. We might seek to dissuade them, but "laws of disapproval" invite ridicule and disobedience. Most laws against consensual

crime are a charter for blackmail and police corruption. That is certainly the case with the age of consent. Britain is the only European Union country that discriminates against homosexual sex. The age of consent for all forms of sex is 15 in France, 14 in Germany and 12 in Spain. The English malaise is not not homosexuality, but the aversion to it. We have struggled for a generation to slam the bedroom door against the policeman, yet he is always trying to climb in the window.

The law seeks to usurp the individual and the family as guardian of the young. However, when it claims to be guardian of public morals, even of a majoritarian morality, it makes itself foolish. The sex act most costly to the community is unprotected sex between men and women. Yet that act has been made legal at the age of 16. The House of Lords is a classic case of the unaccountable in indefensible pursuit of the unworkable.

The Church of England presents a different challenge. Its Lambeth Conference fracas this week was not a quarrel with the law. That is mercifully no longer the domain of bishops, except those voting in the House of Lords. Nor is the Anglican Church a dogmatic hierarchy. Its Lambeth Conference is consultative. National churches draw up their own rules, a tolerance that has kept this religious "Commonwealth" together through thick and thin.

As we saw over the ordination of women, this tolerance is honoured more in the breach than the observance. The liberal lobby wanted to extend to practising homosexuals the full panoply of church blessing, including marriage and ordination. Homosexuals were not silent in need of guidance, but equals in the Christian faith. Against them were ranged two camps. The fundamentalists were

apoplectic that their church should tolerate such tolerance. They stood by Leviticus. Homosexuality was "an abomination", requiring that practitioners "shall surely be put to death: their blood shall be upon them". Others were less ferocious. To them Christian dogma holds sex to be an essentially procreative act and homosexuality is thus "incompatible with Christianity". Whether any modern priest really believes this I cannot tell — what of non-procreating heterosexuals? — but the view clearly excludes homosexuals from the rituals of the church. This group stops short of biblical punishment. It treats the Church of England in this respect as a sexual affinity group, whose rules do not extend to homosexuals. They can be "friends but not members".

Simon Jenkins

What a mess. Had Immanuel Kant a sense of humour, he would have smiled when he said, "From the crooked timber of humanity is no straight thing ever made." The same goes for the crooked timber of Anglicanism. If "what the Bible says is true", then all homosexuals are for the gibbet, along with most of the rest of us. Yet if the Bible is susceptible to local and contemporary interpretation, surely anyone can play. Who can judge between the Bishop of Exeter and the Bishop of Lahore or the Bishop of Edinburgh? Who defines marriage? Who defines sex?

I sensed a cry going up over the Lambeth Conference: O for a Pope! But Anglican doctrine is territorial and certainly not inflexible. Local club rules apply. Los Angeles and Canada can go one way, Nigeria and Pakistan another. What is a mystery is why they choose to come together, not just to talk and pray but to pass motions by which they appear to be "judged" but not bound. By the week's end the Church of England seemed most in need not of a theologian but a policeman. Come along, bishop, let's not have any more trouble. Time to hurry on home.

What is equally baffling is why homosexuals should want anything to do with this fractious and unwelcoming confession. Why not found a church of their own? The answer goes to the heart of the reformers' campaign. They want their relationships treated as "normal" throughout the community, especially within its established institutions. As that shrewd observer Quentin Crisp has pointed out, homosexuals are mostly conservative. They want as far as possible to be like everyone else. They want their faith to be the same faith. They want their bonds of love "blessed" by the same rituals. I can understand that. All of us are social animals. The early Quakers likewise affirmed their non-legal marriage vows in front of "the meeting". It says something for the Church of England that homosexuals still want their relationships blessed by the Anglican rite.

As the past week's incidents show, there is still legal discrimination against homosexuals. It applies in inheritance law, property rights, the definition of privacy and adoption. With the fundamentalists we cannot argue. They have surrendered reason to a book. I am equally suspicious of the conservative who declares: "I applaud past reform, but oppose a future one." It has the smell of hypocrisy about it. But such progress is achieved by the grim plod of debate, not the lunatic crusade of reverse discrimination. Nothing could induce "homophobia" more than local councils subsidising gay workshops, social clubs, holidays and even a "cruising zone" in London's Russell Square. Most homosexuals must cringe at such patronage, as at the raucous vulgarity of "gay television".

Lonely hearts logos

Alex O'Connell says they're not sassy, but sad

This is the first weekend of real summer. Girls are pulling on skimpy tops and hot and bothered boys are working out the best ways to get them off. Its not just love that is in the air, it's lust. The most popular T-shirts this summer are exposing not only arms, belly-bumps and knicker elastic, but also the truth about Nikeless mating and dating rituals. Girls too young for dinner dates and boys too shy for the singles bar are wearing their favourite shop logos stretched out in white cotton on their undeveloped chests. But are they just selling themselves on an advertiser's whim?

At least in the Eighties people seemed more interested in politics than brand-names. Katherine Hammett designed T-shirts bearing protest slogans and attended a reception given by Margaret Thatcher wearing an oversized T-shirt emblazoned with the slogan, "58% don't want Pershing". In the summer of 1984, Frankie Goes to Hollywood's T-shirts were the only thing that veggie-ecarian loaders, Frankie Says Act Up! and towards September, came the rector: Who Gives A... What Frankie Says.

This year a new breed of T-shirt, tighter than Oliver Reed, flirter than Emma Noble, has become uniform for boys and girls who think individuality is something on the GCSE maths syllabus. The most striking thing about these tops is how simple they look: plain white with the all-important logo. French Connection's FCUK T-shirt is worn by the sort of feisty little madam who lives to be gossiped about in the school loos by lesser little madams. While once it may have been bought to annoy acrylic-wearing, cost-conscious mothers, these days they are worn by girls looking for their T-shirt soul-mate: French Connection man.

Wearers of Agnes B's shirts, on the other hand, prefer to send signals out to the black turn-of-century-wearer who thinks the history of philosophy began when Cantona got on the Eurostar. Many find talk-hopping with a copy of *Nazi-era* and a packet of Gibanes far too much like hard work when compared with wearing one of the store's head-set shirts. B Yourself reads one. But wearers don't want to be themselves, that's why they are buying them in the thousands.

Warehouse's logoed T-shirts are bought by young girls who aspire to their particular brand of high-street chic. Designers have superimposed the shop-name against a beach-scene background. "Speak to me and I'll show you the taste of paradise" reads the caption. The lonely-hearts column-walks-the street. The soundbite replaces the long bill and ood of summer romance as wearers contract out their ardours to an advertising agency.

The T-shirt might be about the simplest piece of clothing there is, but love, if not lust, are complicated emotions. Sex and romance may be plastered across 15 inches of cotton and Lycra, but aren't the messages these T-shirts send just as mixed as the materials? It may be true that we live in a materialistic world where what we wear is what we go out and get. But we lose ourselves — as well as our style — when we let a shop choose our personality for us. And might those trying so hard to cut a dash just be selling themselves too skimpyly?

United stand

WARMING news. Jeffrey Archer (left) has been reconciled with his estranged brother, David Brown, who was revealed in 1994 as Archer's illegitimate elder brother, has become close to the Conservative peer during visits to their mother, Lola, now a frail 84-year-old, at her nursing-home. "I see him every time I go to visit my mother," says Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare, speaking publicly about his brother for the first time. "He has been very good with his time, extremely generous. She is dying. She almost died last year but, thank goodness, she pulled through. I speak to her daily, and get down as much as I can. David's a fine man, and has been wonderful with her. Together we are keeping her alive."



The tale of the two brothers could have been lifted from *Kane and Abel*. Brown (right) was born in 1924, before Lola and William Archer married, and was christened Jeffrey. After he was given for adoption in 1939 he changed names five times, settling on David Brown. Lola and William married a couple of days after he was adopted, and the following year the more famous Jeffrey arrived. He grew up thinking he was an only child. Brown realised they were brothers in 1981, when he spotted Lola on a *This Is Your Life* about Archer. "That's my mother!" he shouted. When the tabloids heard, Archer asked Brown to "stay discreet", for their mother's sake. He has obeyed. Their mother will be delighted by the truce.

EVER wondered how Terry Waite stays so trim? The *Sopra* restaurant in Blackheath lists *The Terry Waite Special (he lives near by)*. Patrons can expect to enjoy "a popular meal (sic) of superb chicken, mixed seafood, fine steaks, rice and a variety of nuts". And you are free to leave. Thankfully.

Epic struggle

THE film-making Scott brothers are in dispute. Ridley and Tony, the Geordies who own Shepperton Studios, have bought an Oscar-potential screenplay with their joint production company. The trouble is that Ridley, the *Blade Runner* and *Thelma and Louise* maker, is determined to take the director's chair; but Tony, the *Top Gun* helmsman, has similar aims. "Before it's over there may be fist-fights," warns Chris Zarpas, a colleague. The film is about a man who repossesses jets for a living. Not sure the combined talents of both brothers would lure me to the local Beapit.

FANCY a jolly day out at a funeral parlour? Willows, which tends to the dead in Essex, offers an open day for kids to ride in a Victorian funeral hearse and on a horse-drawn carriage. Refreshments are available. A sober-sungent gent explains: "Funerals are for all the family. Children should take part."

Bongo beat

DOES African blood course through the veins of Sir Simon Ra-



JASPER GERARD

(pictured)? The conductor was asked whether he received professional help for his distinctive frizzy hair. "Do you think I'd pay for it to look like this?" Sir Simon retorted. Then he started fiddling with his baton nervously and explained that neither of his parents were similarly afflicted. What might explain it, he continued, is the unknown ances-



try of his father — a businessman and amateur jazz musician — who was a founding, so the "perm" may well have stemmed from anonymous forebears. Whatever his origins, he still has great rhythm.

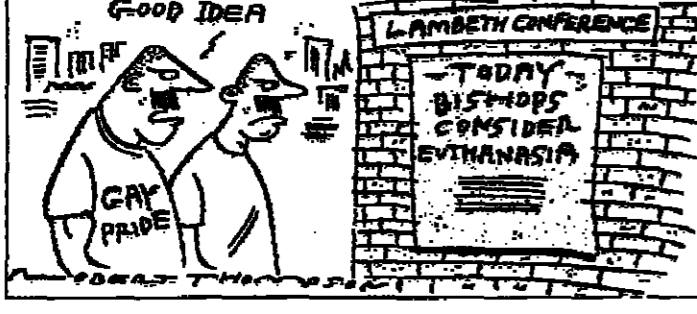
OVER dinner at Claridge's, Peter Mandelson was asked whether he would send a Christmas card to Stephen Bayley, the erstwhile creative director of the *Dome*. "Stephen Bayley," he sighed "was never on my Christmas card list."

Battered out

A REVOLT by the discerning denizens of Oxford has forced Harry Ramsden's, the legendary Yorkshire fish and chips emporium, out of the city. Criticisms of Ramsden's "shocking pink walls and wall-to-wall carpets", and ensuing poor sales, have forced a retreat. "We have been losing money. It has not worked," says Matthew Almond, the most recent manager. "Ramsden's is all right in Jeddah, Hong Kong and Singapore so, it should be in Oxford," protests HQ. Local critics are delighted: "How out of tune it seems in a sophisticated, cosmopolitan city like Oxford," writes Chris Gray, food reviewer. Fans of the faty grub are outraged. Andrew Smith, Employment Minister and MP for the neighbouring Oxford East, has offered his support: "Harry's fish and chips are brilliant." Desmond Morris is another loyal customer. "It is a fine restaurant but the decor is slightly Oxford Street." If you know what I mean. "Oh, I do indeed, Des.



THE lord of the manor in Wittersham has cleared the peacocks from his lawns in preparation for a jolly bash tonight to celebrate his special friend's birthday. Lord Alli of Norbury, the newly ennobled media tycoon and *FOI* (Friend Of Tony), has invited scores of guests to his pad in Kent to mark the 40th birthday of Charlie Parsons, known to respectful locals as Baroness Alli. Among them: six Cabinet ministers including Peter Mandelson, Mo Mowlam and Chris Smith, who have all stayed at the weekend retreat of Alli and Parsons. The couple, who with Bob Geldof founded Planet 24, which makes *The Big Breakfast*, have invited friends from that milieu such as Melanie Sykes and Denise van Outen. Only Parsons's friends are, as former Tonbridge School boys, expected to wear black ties. Caterers have been pouring into Alli's estate and workmen have erected a fair and marquees. Guests have been urged to bring their trunks to cool off in the pool, below a swing similar to one in that racy film *The Stud*. Alli will provide hot-air balloons for the ride home. "There's a lot of excitement in the village," says a local. "Few of us have been invited, but it's creating a stir. The place is overrun with the flat-footed. Still, as long as the baroness enjoys it."



TARGET... WHY LEWINS... TAKE BUT DE... Who are the... This is a vertical advertisement strip on the right edge of the page, containing various text fragments and logos.



TARGET AMERICA

Terrorism aimed at accentuating American world-weariness

Few certainties other than death and maiming attach to the almost simultaneous bombing attacks yesterday against the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. As with the 1996 truck bombing of the US base in Dhahran, it is possible that no individual or group will claim responsibility... and that the attackers will never be firmly identified. The only conclusion which seems safe at this stage is that the instigators were neither Kenyan nor Tanzanian.

World Trade Centre in New York and to Dhahran. Last May, he claimed to be preparing terrorist action "within weeks". He is known to run terrorist training camps in Sudan and has cells in Somalia: from there, it would be a relatively simple matter to smuggle explosives and detonators south. Another possible source is Jihadi, the Egyptian extremist cell which assassinated Arwar Sadat. A week ago, Jihad issued a threat to retaliate against Americans after the US helped in the extradition of some Jihad members from Albania to Cairo. It spoke of "preparations for a response which we hope they will read with care, because we will write it, with God's help, in language they will understand".

WHY LEWINSKY MATTERS

Clinton has a week to reconsider his story

The wagons are circling around the White House. Monica Lewinsky's reported testimony has raised the stakes. President Clinton's supporters are already attempting to tarnish her reputation. The American public is presently inclined both to accept Ms Lewinsky's story and to wish that the whole sorry saga would simply disappear. It will not, and should not. On August 17 the President, who has offered no explanation of his relationship with his former intern, will testify before the grand jury; in the next week he must decide what he will say.

outlined to the grand jury. What they cannot be sure of is the corroborating material she has been able to provide and the additional testimony of secret service agents and other members of the President's personal staff who Kenneth Starr has now successfully subpoenaed over Mr Clinton's objections. When his final report is laid before Congress shortly, the President's position could suddenly become extremely uncomfortable.

TAKE BUT DEGREE AWAY...

Who are the masters now?

Of all the strange deities worshipped in Oxford quads and Cambridge courts the green-eyed god has few adherents. Membership of either university confers upon its undergraduates a privileged generosity which is the solvent of mean-mindedness. In The Older Universities of England, the author recalls the words of a prominent trade unionist after a period in Cambridge, "it made me a rebel, a rebel against all mean and ugly conditions in our municipal life".

additional garland which could be secured by any honourable graduate. It cannot, of course, rank with a Masters degree secured by dint of postgraduate work but there no serious academic would ever think it did. The idea that it devalues other Masters degrees is ludicrous. One might as well suggest that calling Elvis "the King" devalues the monarchy. Those who argue for abolition cannot base their case on the need to avoid confusion. There is none.

صحرا في لبنان

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Peanington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 0171-762 5000

No easy solution to Iraq's threat

From the Foreign Secretary

Sir, Simon Jenkins ("Call it a day, Mr Cook", August 5) offers us an easy solution to the threat posed by Saddam Hussein - ignore it and hope it goes away. If only it were so easy. His premise is that all our efforts - sanctions, the UN inspectors and the periodic stand-offs - have achieved nothing. This is simply wrong.

Unmuzzled 'Watchdog' aids public

From Mr Gerald Isaaman

Sir, Your report today that companies such as Ford, Dixons and Airtours are so concerned about the effectiveness of Anne Robinson's Watchdog consumer programme that they are seeking "constructive action" against it, is most welcome. It comes at a time of widespread reports that the public in Britain, compared with elsewhere in Europe and in America, is ripped off on the price of anything from cars and computers to pensions and holiday packages with small-print exclusions you can hardly read. And that is not to forget the supermarkets - now to be investigated by the Office of Fair Trading (report, Business, July 31) - which march into towns, slash their prices to destroy the local small-shop competition, and then enjoy the cream they have created by raising prices, something that planning legislation cannot combat.

Trying Bentley by today's standards

From Mr Benedict Birnberg

Sir, Mr Piers Ashworth, QC (letter, August 4), is quite wrong to say that the fundamental question posed by the Bentley decision is: "Is it right to retry the crimes of yesterday by the standards of today?" At the heart of the Court of Appeal's judgment was the finding that, applying the law as it was in 1953, on the facts of the case, the joint enterprise of Craig and Bentley was over when PC Miles was shot by Craig and that "the Court of Criminal Appeal failed to grapple with this ground of appeal which should have succeeded".

London squares

From Mr Irving Yass

Sir, Sir Norman Foster's "World squares for all" proposal, which includes pedestrianisation of one side of Trafalgar Square and Parliament Square, is far from being an "airy-fairy" planning scheme (Councillor Justin Powell-Tuck's letter, July 28). The proposal would create a vibrant and attractive atmosphere and offer real benefits to London's residents, commuters and visitors alike.

Swindon in space

From Mr R. Mash

Sir, As a believer in God, I must say that I find it quite reassuring that scientists have concluded that our galaxy is not "special", but merely a "Swindon in space" (report, August 5). This seems quite consistent with a Christian view of God (and especially his sense of humour). I would have been quite perturbed had scientists concluded that other galaxies were in fact insignificant satellites of our own.

Burma ten years on

From the Director of the United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Sir, On Saturday, many of us will commemorate the birth ten years ago of the movement for democracy in Burma which, as your leading article (August 5) recalled, led to the elections of 1990 from which Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy emerged as overwhelming victors. Tragically, the renamed State Peace and Development Council annulled the elections and incarcerated her.

Church baptisms

From the Rector of Wisley with Pyrford

Sir, Mr Tony Green (letter, August 1) described his local church's refusal to baptise his daughter. His letter highlights the gap in understanding between the sacramental meaning of baptism and the popular belief held by the majority of people today. This is seen in the fact that there are approximately 25 million baptised Anglicans in this country, yet only one million will be in church on any Sunday.

Lord Peter's friends

From Mr D. O. R. Mossman

Sir, Detective Inspector Parker may become Wimsley's brother-in-law (letter, July 30), but not before he has put up with a great deal of being patronised and treated as an underling by Lord Peter, who seems to regard the entire Scotland Yard establishment as his personal staff. "I want you to take this to Scotland Yard immediately," says Wimsley to Parker in Whose Body? "You will see Sir Alexander Mackerzie personally, and get the paper sent out at once, by his authority; you will tell him that you have solved the problems of the Levy murder and the Battersea mystery." Then he declines to tell Parker the solution.

Bell in Burundi

From Mr Martin Bell, MP for Tatton (Independent)

Sir, The headline to David Orr's report of July 31 implies that the object of my mission to Burundi is to "highlight the plight of the Tutsis". It is nothing of the kind. The mission was undertaken on behalf of Unicef's UK Committee to draw attention to the plight of children in conflict. Unicef and all the MFs involved make no distinction between the ethnic groups of Burundi. All its people have suffered terribly and need our help.

Early signs

From Dr Matt Jones

Sir, Today, a computing science colleague bought a sandwich with a "sell-by" date of "160". Apparently the food was edible, so we can only assume this is an early example of the millennium bug. Yours, MATT JONES, School of Computing, Middlesex University, Bounds Green Road N11 2NQ. m.jones@mdx.ac.uk July 27.

Ha'p'orth of tars

From Mr Bob Howell

Sir, If the MoD is serious about cost saving, it could do worse than dismiss the civil servants responsible for the idiotic decision to scrap the commemorative plaques given to local dignitaries on the occasion of a visit by a Royal Navy warship to a foreign port (report, August 6). The cost of these plaques is trivial; the goodwill generated must be immense. The dismissal of those concerned would save considerably more than the £40,000 per annum or so mentioned in your report and, one hopes, serve pour encourager les autres. Yours faithfully, BOB HOWELL, 6 The Links, Walton-on-Thames KT12 1HD, August 7.

Ha'p'orth of tars

From Mr Bob Howell

The official justification for the anomaly has been that the Parole Board is concerned only with risk, whereas the Home Secretary is also concerned with public confidence in the system. But is it only murderers whose release affects public confidence? And might not the public have more confidence in a decision taken not by a single politician but by a panel of non-politicians? I am &c, NIGEL WALKER (Director, Cambridge Institute of Criminology, 197-81), King's College, Cambridge CB2 1ST, August 1.

Lonely hearts logos

JW

Advertisement for a book or service

صكذامن لاصملا



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE Lord-Lieutenant of the Isle of Wight (Mr Christopher Bland). Her Royal Highness, accompanied by Captain Timothy Laurence RN, this morning visited the United Kingdom Sailing Academy, West Coast, and was received by Her Majesty's

Weekend birthdays

TODAY: Princess Beatrice of York is ten years old. Professor Sir Jack Baldwin, FRCS, chemist, 60; Mr Keith Barron, actor, 54; Mr Dennis Canavan, MP, 56; Lord Chapple, 77; Viscount Combermere, 69; the Earl of Donoughmore, 71; Lord Hayhoe, 73; Mr Dustin Hoffman, actor, 61; Lieutenant-General Sir David Howe, 76; Professor Sir Laurence Hunter, chairman, Police Negotiating Board, 64. Mr P.H. Lapping, Headmaster, Sherborne School, Dorset, 57; Mr Nigel Mansell, racing driver, 45; Sir Alan Muir Wood, FRCS, civil engineer, 77; Lord Neil of Bladen, QC, 72; Professor Sir Roger Penrose, FRS, mathematician, 67; Mr Stephen Smith, Headmaster, Bedford Modern School, 50. Mr Marshall Sir Colin Terry, 55; Mr Neil Thorne, former MP, 66; Mr Bill Wigglesworth, former deputy director-general, Ofel, 61; Sir John Wood, former High Court judge, 76. TOMORROW: Mr D.W. Astor, former chairman, CPRE, 55; Viscount Bangor, 50; Sir Philip Beck, former chairman,

Cardiff Law School

Centre for Professional Legal Studies Legal Practice Course Results for 1997-98: Pass Ahmed, AM; Bannerman Bruce, DE; Battick, NCD; Bayliss, CE; Birmingham, AL; Campbell-Taylor, TM; David, RR; Edwards, CJ; Evans, CE; Evans, EG; Gerrard, TA; Haggan, TJ; Hill, SJ; Hussell, DA; Jasperse, DH; John, SJ; Jones, DG; Lankester, JC; Lewis, G; Lowney, RA; McClelland, EJ; McCourt, RC; Morris, CJ; Needs, SC; Nicholas, SB; Norman, J; Pigdon, AR; Pinch, ND; Watkins, RA. Pass with Commendation Antrobus, RW; Armstrong, CS; Ball, AM; Barrett, JW; Bowen, EJ; Clark, RJ; Cronin, BM; Davies, AP; Davies, JC; Dowle, LJ; Farmer, DA; Fennell, T; Gwent, SJ; Hardy, AC; Hasson, JP; Hayden, NT; Holmes, JG; Howe, LJ; Islam, H; Jeavons, L; Jones, GM; Jones, H; Jones, RN; Lennon, R; Lewis, DA; Mathews, CM; Maw, HLF; Merrell, JL; Morgan, KJ; Nagari, R; Newbold, MJ; O'Callaghan, TC; Pattenden, J; Richards, CFI; Richards, ME; Robinson, AJ; Stratford, SEL; Thomas, LE; Tobias, A; Trean, CD; Turner, RA; Warner, E; Watts, RL; Yeomans, LC. Pass with Distinction Bassett, D; Cole, KSA; Davies, CSE; Denton, AL; Harfield, RL; Howells, RJ; Ingreycourt, M; McNeely, N; Reynolds Lewis, CL; Thomas, CL; Turnbull, CB; White, E; Williams, CA; Williams, MK.



Simon Hill and Patricia Krohn of Sloane Square, London, who have recently announced their engagement

Forthcoming marriages

Mr R.C.H. Allen and Miss D.B.S. Stockair The engagement is announced between Richard Charles Howard, eldest son of Mr and Mrs C.G.H. Allen, of Ealing, W5, and Diana Belinda Sue, youngest daughter of Professor and Mrs R.K. Sinclair, of Sydney, Australia. Dr N.G. Bellenger and Dr A.E. Hinton The engagement is announced between Nicholas Gilmore, son of Dr and Mrs Robert Bellenger, of Fareham, Hampshire, and Anna Emily, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs P. Raymond-Hinton, of Highgate, London. Mr A.R. Jackson and Miss E.L. Bower The engagement is announced between Andrew Robert, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Alan Jackson, of Hammer-smith, London, and Emma Louise, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs John Bower, of Stourbridge, West Midlands. Mr R.J. James and Miss J.L. Mills The engagement is announced between Robert John, son of Mrs E.A. James and the late Mr M.J. James, of Petersfield, Hampshire, and Laura Jane, daughter of Mr and Mrs M.H. Mills, also of Petersfield. Mr C.E. Jones and Miss J.K.H. Sutcliffe The engagement is announced between Charles Edward, son of Mr and Mrs Peter Jones, of Alvechurch, Worcestershire, and Jane Katharine Harvey, daughter of Dr and Mrs John Sutcliffe, of Bicknacre, Essex. Major C.N. Milford-Slade and Miss L.G. Mucklow The engagement is announced between Major Christopher Milford-Slade, The Life Guards, elder son of Major and Mrs Anthony Milford-Slade, of Montys Court, Taunton, and Lucinda, daughter of Mr and Mrs Albert Mucklow, of Hagley, Worcestershire. Mr N.G.S. Verdon and Miss J.C. Beacroft The engagement is announced between Nigel, only son of Colonel George Verdon, OBE, vet, and Mrs Verdon, of Camberley, Surrey, and Judi, daughter of Dr and Mrs John Beacroft, of Richmond, Surrey. Latest wills Marjorie Elizabeth Tanner of Meole Brace, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, left estate valued at £716,311 net. She left £1,000 to Shropshire branch of the NSPCC. Clara Towne of Cottingham, East Yorkshire, left estate valued at £714,370 net. Sityambandhu Tripathy, of Arthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, left estate valued at £665,333 net.

Service dinner

HQ RAF Personnel and Training Command Wing Commander G. Ware, President of the Mess Committee, with officers and their ladies gave a dinner at RAF Innsworth last night to mark the retirement of Air Chief Marshal Sir David Cousins, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Royal Air Force Personnel and Training Command, Air Vice-Marshal R.A. Wright also spoke. Lady Cousins, Air Vice-Marshal and Mrs Robert O'Brien, the Ven Peter and Mrs Turner and Air Commodore and Mrs Delany were among the guests.

New Recorders

The following have been appointed Recorders, assigned to the Western Circuit, the Wales and Chester Circuit and the South Eastern Circuit. Western Circuit Mr Thomas Gareth Cowling, Mr Neil Murray Ford, QC, Mr Geoffrey Michael Mercer, Mr Frank Simon Privat, Miss Elizabeth Anne Ralphs. Wales and Chester Circuit Mr David John Morgan Aubrey, QC, Mr Huw Davies, District Judge Godfrey James Evans, Mr Gary Robert Hickinbottom, Mr Geoffrey William Little, District Judge Dafydd Lloyd Hughes, Mr David John Phillips, QC, District Judge David Wyn Rees, Mr Gwilym Wyn Rees, Mr Robin Godfrey Spencer, Mr Christopher John Vosper. South Eastern Circuit Mrs Elizabeth Honora Andrew, Miss Alison Ball, QC, Mr William James Lynton Blair, QC, District Judge Robert Henry Lynn Blomfield, District Judge David William Caddick, Mr Lawrence Francis Richard Cohen, QC, Mr Jeremy Lionel Cooke, QC, Mr

Pewterers' Company

The following have been elected officers of the Pewterers' Company for the ensuing year: Master, Mr M.J.W. Piercy; Upper Warden, Mr William Grant; Renner Warden, Mr M.G.C. Gibbs.

Anniversaries

TODAY BIRTHS: Jacques de Beauval, theologian, Rouen, 1653; William Bateson, biologist, Whitby, 1861; P.A.M. Dirac, physicist, Nobel laureate 1933, Bristol, 1902; Andy Warhol, painter, Pittsburgh, 1931. DEATHS: Thomas a Kempis, theologian, Agnetenberg, The Netherlands, 1471; George Canning, Prime Minister 1827, London, 1827; Lucia Mathews (Mrs Vestris), actress, London, 1856; Jacob Burckhardt, historian, Basle, 1897; Anton Denikin, commander of the anti-Bolshevik forces in the Russian Civil War 1918-20, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1947; Nicholas Monsarrat, novelist, London, 1979. The English Poor Law Act was passed, 1834. The Great Train Robbery: £24 million stolen from the Glasgow-London train at Cheddington, Buckinghamshire, 1963. John McCarthy was released from captivity in Beirut after 1.943 days, 1991. TOMORROW BIRTHS: Isak Walton, author of The Compleat Angler, Stafford, 1593; Thomas Tel-

Baron Harris of Haringey

The life barony conferred upon Mr Jonathan Toby Harris has been gazetted by the name, style and title of Baron Harris of Haringey, of Hornsey in the London Borough of Haringey. His appointment will take effect from November 16.

Appointments

Mr Peter Cooper has been appointed as Director responsible for the Institute of Physics's work relating to education, public affairs, research, science policy and scientific conferences. His appointment will take effect from November 16.

President Nixon close to decision on resignation

From Fred Emery and Patrick Brogan, Washington, Aug 7 President Nixon tonight was close to a decision whether to resign. Three Republican leaders emerged from a 35-minute meeting with the President saying that they had told him how grave his position was with Congress. They said they assumed the President accepted their evaluation. No decision had yet been reached, said Senator Barry Goldwater, leader of the deputation, but none of the three warned that Mr Nixon would fight on. The President's first meeting in weeks with his congressional party leaders - the others were Senator Hugh Scott and Representative John Rhodes, Senate and House minority leaders, respectively - came at the end of a fateful day which had much of Washington persuaded that it was Mr Nixon's last in office. The three men, appearing like pallbearers from the White House west wing

ON THIS DAY

August 8, 1974 On the day this report appeared, Richard Nixon resigned as President of the United States. It was six years to the day after he had accepted his party's presidential nomination. Scott indeed claimed that resignation had "not even come up". Mr Rhodes, who has already announced that he will vote to impeach the President, said that they talked like the four old friends they were, but that "it was very painful for all of us". Mr Scott emphasised that the President was only considering the national interest. They had told him that "the situation is very gloomy" in Congress; they gave him further evaluations "which I think ought to remain between ourselves". He did not deny a suggestion that they had warned the President that he was facing conviction and removal from office. Mr Scott said he would "assume the President was aware" of the erosion of his support. Asked for the President's mood in reaction to the gloomy forecast they gave, Mr Scott answered: "The President is in entire control of himself. He is serene and he was most amiable, and I assume he simply accepted our evaluation since he had solicited our views."

University news

Jesus College, Cambridge Dr James Clarkson, Dr Mary Laven, and Mr Peter John Smith have been elected into Fellowships of Class II from September 30.

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Lead Gold, you are great, thank you for the way you are... BIRTHS: ADOLPHUS-PHILIPS - On August 2nd at The Portland Hospital in Brussels and Charles, a son, Christopher Jim Pope. ALAN - On August 2nd 1998 to Elizabeth (née Leighton) and Jonathan, a daughter, Kristina Anne, a sister for Hannah. AUBREY - On July 22nd to Marie (née Leighton) and Kevin, a daughter, Helena Lara. BROWN - On July 29th 1998 at 150 pm to David and Sarah (née Payne), a beautiful daughter, Gemma Sarah Juliana. CLIFTON - Gemma and Phil are pleased to announce the arrival of baby Jack on August 6th 1998. CURRIE - On July 29th to Rachel (née Blackburn) and Paul, a daughter, Emily Victoria, a sister for Georgia. ELSTAC - On August 6th at The Portland Hospital to Susan (née Wadlington) and Richard, a son, William James. JURKSCHAT - On August 2nd at home, to Katherine (née de Dardigny) and Angus, a beautiful daughter, Natasha Clare MacGregor, a sister for Rachael. LANGTON KENDALL - On July 20th 1998 at Queen Charlotte's Hospital to Christine (née Pratt) and Angus, a son, Benedict James George, a brother for Frances and Isabella. OSBORNE - A little earlier than planned, on July 17th at Derriford Hospital in Fynewton to Katie Griffin and Clark Oswald, a little boy, Casper George Griffin, brother to Henry. Thanks to all the staff for a safe delivery. DEATHS: BREWER - Peter on Thursday August 6th 1998, peacefully in his sleep at home having courageously fought a long illness without complaint. Deceased husband of Wendy, daughter of Colin and Toopi and proud member of Alexander and Oliver. Funeral service at St Andrew's Church, Parkside, on Tuesday August 18th. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to Motor Neurone Disease Association or Alzheimer's Disease Society, c/o The Royal Legation, 1 Brompton Road, Brompton, London, W1 2LP. VAUDREY - On 8th August in Washington DC to Helen and Antony, a son, Theodore Patrick. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: FAHLE - The Family of the late Michael James Fairfax, O.B.E. of Monkfish, Angus, Scotland, thank most sincerely all family and many friends who came to Monkfish Church on Friday, July 24th, 1998, to share in the funeral service of their much loved son of Jacqui, Lisa and Richard, father-in-law of Paul and Grandpa of Georgia. He will be loved and remembered always. EVANS - Margary Wilbrods Joyce Evans, peacefully passed away on Friday 5th July. All her family will miss her immensely. A funeral service will be held at 1.30 on Monday 10th August at Fungo Baptist Church. HACKETT - Kate Evelyn, passed away in her sleep at St Richard's Hospital, Chichester, on 8th August. Deeply mourned by her daughter Josephine, her son Charles and grand daughter Emma and Kathryn. Funeral service at 11.00am on Wednesday 12th August at St Paul's Church, Worthing, Chichester.

MORROW - Christine Letts, of St Anne's College Oxford, peacefully on August 4th 1998, aged 85. She was the wife of the late Sir Alan Letts, M.A., D.D., F.R.S., who died on August 12th at 9pm. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to COCAFAM, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford. NEWMAN - On the 5th August 1998, peacefully in Warwick Hospital, Thomas Erik, aged 86 weeks, following a long illness. The funeral service will take place on Tuesday 11th August at St Mary's Church, Tysoe at 1.30pm. Family flowers only please. Donations if desired for the benefit of Cancer Research may be left at the service or sent c/o The Leicestershire Cancer Research Society, 100 Victoria Street, Leicester, LE1 5AZ. FERRIS - (née Johnston) On Monday 2nd August 1998 in Jersey, Marion, widow of the late John Ferris and Ma of Louise, Laura and Toni. MAMBLE - John Henry Mamble passed peacefully away in Newbury Hospital on 6th August 1998. Beloved husband of Jane, much loved father of Louise and Selina. The funeral service will take place at Downing College Chapel on Thursday August 13th at 2.00pm. Enquiries to H J Palatin Ltd Underburn, 43 High Street, Luton, Cambridge CB1 8EF. IN MEMORIAM: IN THANKFUL MEMORY of the officers and men of Great Britain, Ireland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa who, having distinguished themselves during their counter-terrorist operations, August 8, 1918 and 1998, beloved wife of the late Major General Sir John DAVENPORT, who was killed in action on August 8, 1918, and whose remains were buried in the Indian cemetery and of the Indian Regiment and of the Royal and Merchant Navy who have served since over four years made their victory possible.

BIRTHDAYS: MARSHALL - Jennifer Elizabeth, to be celebrated with us by Jane Cook. SERVICES: HAVE YOU been told... WANTED: SPOKE WANTED... TICKETS FOR SALE: ALL AVAILABLE... FOR SALE: A BEAUTIFUL... IN MEMORIAM: THE SINGPOST: A 1998-1999... GIFTS: A BEAUTIFUL... ANNOUNCEMENTS: NOTICE to holiday guests... TRUSTEE ACTS: NOTICE to holiday guests... PUBLIC NOTICES: NOTICE to holiday guests... ANNOUNCEMENTS: NOTICE to holiday guests...

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OBITUARIES

NAT GONELLA

Nat Gonella, jazz trumpeter, musician and bandleader, died on August 6 aged 90. He was born on March 7, 1908.

Nat Gonella was one of the last surviving legendary performers from the golden age of prewar British jazz. His electrifying virtuosity on the trumpet brought him, at the peak of his fame, an international stature rivaling that of his American idol, Louis Armstrong, and his career, which spanned more than 70 years, profoundly influenced the style of later trumpeters, notably Humphrey Lytelson and Kenny Baker.

Born in King's Cross, London, Nathaniel Charles Gonella was the fourth of the six children of an Italian-Cockney taxi driver. He was only seven when his father died, and was sent to St Mary's Guardians School in North London, where he learnt the cornet and played in the school's brass band.

In 1924, at the age of 16, he auditioned successfully for the impresario Archie Pitt, joining his band, The Busy Boys, in which he played the trumpet for four years in a series of Pitt's stage revues. Gracie Fields, then married to Pitt, noticed Gonella's love of popular dance music and bought him a wind-up gramophone, on which he discovered Louis Armstrong's recording of Wild Man Blues, which began his lifelong passion for jazz.

In 1930 Gonella joined the band of Billy Cotton, with whom he made his first recording, That Rhythm Man. His marriage to Betty Godecharle, and the birth of their daughter Natalie, in October 1930, was followed by Gonella's first recording as a vocalist on one of

Billy Cotton's bestselling records, Bessie Couldn't Help It.

During the next four years, Gonella became an increasingly popular trumpeter and vocalist with the bands of Roy Fox and Lew Stone, appearing at the Monseigneur night club and at the London Palladium, where he first met Louis Armstrong. In 1935, he left Lew Stone to form his own band, Nat Gonella and his Georgians, achieving such a level of nationwide popularity with his signature tune, Georgia on My Mind, that he had his own fan club magazine, edited by his wife.

His style of "scat-singing," heavily influenced by Louis Armstrong, was frowned upon by the BBC's puritanical Director-General, John Reith, and there was headline publicity when Reith vetoed the words, "I got ants in my pants," in Gonella's recording of I Can't Dance. He was banned from the air for a year, and the episode was immortalised by a popular fimerick:

"There was a bandleader named Nat

"Who attempted to broadcast some 'scat'"

"But they said, 'Oh Gonella, 'I say, my dear fellow,

"We really can't let you do that!"

By then he was earning £400 a week, but his marriage had foundered, and he was romantically involved with his band's glamorous vocalist, Stella Moya, who became his second wife. During the war, however, while Gonella was serving in Africa with the Pioneer Corps, Miss Moya defected with an American Air Force colonel. Vowing vengeance, Gonella shadowed the lovers on to the escalator at Waterloo, but on seeing that his rival was 6ft 3in tall decided that di-

vorice was a better option. In 1946 he set up home with Dorothy Collins, who became his third wife in 1963.

After the war, Gonella found that the big money and glamour of his 1930s heyday had largely disappeared. He became a solo performer on variety bills, and in 1953 recorded a popular duo of Ma, He's Making Eyes At Me, with his favourite female jazz singer Beryl Bryden, accompanied by his own trumpet.

His devotion to Louis Armstrong endured, and in 1966, when Gonella was the castaway on Desert Island Discs his eight chosen records included three by Armstrong. For some years after Armstrong's death in 1971, Gonella toured Britain in the stage tribute, Salute To Satchmo.

In later years, with money in short supply, he gallantly played and sang in working men's clubs, bingo halls and even strip joints, but he never lost his mesmeric ability to win an audience over and hold it spellbound. In the 1970s Gonella's new recording of one of his best 1930s hits, Oh Mo'nah, restored him to the charts, and in 1985 Ron Brown's biography of him, Georgia On My Mind, brought him many new admirers.

In 1994, Humphrey Lytelson, a Gonella fan since the age of 15, led the celebrations when the square in front of Gosport Town Hall was renamed Nat Gonella Square. His final recordings as a vocalist, with Kenny Baker and Digby Fairweather on trumpet, were made in February of this year, a month before his 90th birthday.

His third wife, Dorothy, died in 1996. He is survived by Natalie Wilson, his daughter by his first marriage.



Gonella never lost his ability to captivate an audience

SHARI LEWIS

Shari Lewis, children's television host and puppeteer, died of cancer in Los Angeles on August 2 aged 64. She was born in New York on January 17, 1934.



Lewis and her loquacious trademark, Lamb Chop

AS A ventriloquist and children's television presenter, Shari Lewis was perhaps an unlikely candidate for a place in political history. But in 1993 the creative force behind a sock puppet called Lamb Chop testified before a Congressional inquiry into children's television, and ensured her place in the record books by sending the puppet to speak in her place. Congressmen were both amused and amazed at the spectacle of the mischievous lamb on the end of Lewis's arm delivering a speech on the need for government to enact legislation protecting children from poor quality television. It was undoubtedly the first time a puppet had testified on Capitol Hill.

It was also entirely characteristic of Lewis, who preferred to let the characters she created become a mouthpiece for her values and views. The garrulous, long-lashed Lamb Chop became her trademark (and was seen on the BBC between 1968 and 1976), but Lewis was the brains behind a number of other children's television characters, such as Bushy Puppy and Charlie Horse. In her 50 years in show-business she used her various alter egos to give valuable lessons in life (and in music appreciation) to successive generations of children.

Lewis was born Shari Hurwitz in New York City in 1934. Her father was a university professor and amateur magician, her mother was a pianist. When Lewis displayed a talent

for ventriloquism as a child, her father encouraged her talent, hiring a former vaudeville act to coach her.

Lewis studied music, dance and acting in her teens, preparing for a career in show business. She worked in musical theatre, including productions of Damn Yankees and Bye Bye Birdie, but her big break came in 1957, when she introduced the character Lamb Chop on the children's television show Captain Kangaroo.

That appearance eventually landed Lewis her own morning television programme, The Shari Show, which ran in the US from 1957 to 1963. The show featured in equal parts puppetry and music. Lewis said her guiding ethos was imparting information to children without talking down to them. She described herself

not as a surrogate parent, but a fellow playmate.

Despite the show's success, when the children's television climate changed to favour animation in the mid-1960s, Lewis found herself out of work. She reinvented herself as a Las Vegas performer and appeared on celebrity game-shows. She also conducted symphony orchestras, guest starred in television series and wrote more than 60 children's books, before returning to television with the series Lamb Chop's Play-Along (1989-1995) and The Charlie Horse Music Pizza, which was in production at the time of her death.

In her career Lewis won many awards, among them 12 Emmys. She is survived by her husband Jeremy Tarcher and a daughter.

THE REV THOMAS NICOL

The Rev Thomas Nicol, LVO, MBE, MC, former domestic chaplain in Scotland in the Queen, died on July 28 aged 81. He was born on January 24, 1917.



TOM NICOL won his Military Cross in the Western Desert in 1943 for rescuing wounded men under heavy fire. He was also awarded the Black Cross for his services as a chaplain, had suffered severe casualties at Wadi Akarit, one of the last battles fought by the Eighth Army in North Africa.

Soldiers, hit by the enemy mortars and machine-guns, lay dangerously exposed outside the battalion's position — posing serious problems over their evacuation. On the evening of April 6, taking a team of stretcher bearers with him, Nicol braved the constant fire from German snipers to recover the injured men, rescuing more than 20 from one area alone.

His citation said that the

chaplain, a number of whose companions were themselves shot during the operation, had been "an inspiration" to the whole battalion, and not for the first time. Six months earlier, after El Alamein, Nicol had been just about to hold a committal service for all those who had died with 153 Brigade in the Highland Division when the Germans started shelling the ground around them and all those present had to take

shelter in the newly dug graves.

Tom Nicol stayed with the battalion for the Sicily landings and crossed the Channel with it on D-Day in the following year, his tall presence in the front line winning the increasing respect of those around him.

Men remembered many years afterwards how, at Breville in Normandy, which was to become a battle honour for the Black Watch, the chaplain could be seen at dusk bearing an armful of wooden crosses to place — while once more dodging the snipers — on the temporary graves of all the fallen.

Nicol was later transferred to 126 Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, with whom he stayed throughout the rest of the fighting for North-West Europe. He was then demobilised to become the Church of Scotland minister at Broughty Ferry, near Dundee.

Restless after three years, however, he rejoined the Royal Army Chaplains' Department

in 1949 and remained with it for nearly a quarter of a century.

Attached to the 1st Battalion Black Watch, he served with distinction in the Korean war, for which he was appointed MBE (mil). He shared a Jeep with the battalion doctor as they toured the battle zones, earning themselves the sobriquet "Body and Soul". He stayed with the Black Watch when it went to Kenya during the Mau Mau emergency, was later posted to the Royal Scots Fusiliers and ended his career in the Chaplains' Department as assistant chaplain-general in Scotland.

On retiring from the Army in 1972, Nicol was appointed minister in Craithie, the church attended by the Royal Family when staying at Balmoral. He became at the same time domestic chaplain to the Queen — a position which he retained for two years after retiring from Craithie in 1977. He remained an extra chaplain to the Queen thereafter.

Born Thomas James Trail Nicol in Ayrshire, he was the son of another Church of Scotland minister, who had himself won the MC in the First World War. Tom's schooling at Edinburgh Academy, Dundee High School, Glasgow Academy and Aberdeen Grammar School, reflected his father's sequence of ministries. But Aberdeen was where the family had its roots. Both of Tom's grandfathers had been professors at Aberdeen University, and it was there that he read divinity.

He enlisted as a private in the Black Watch when war broke out, and later commanded the battalion's pioneer platoon before being given leave in 1941 to be ordained. It was after that that he joined the 5th Battalion.

He met all members of the Royal Family during his time at Craithie, and even after retiring spent several weekends with his wife as guests of the Queen Mother in the Castle of Mey. He retained close links with the Church of Scotland and with Aberdeen University. He became honorary colonel of the university's Officer Training Corps, and he was awarded an honorary doctorate in 1968. But Nicol spent much of his retirement indulging his passion for hill walking and digging the garden of his Perthshire home.

Tom Nicol was a gentle giant who once played football as an amateur for Aberdeen and came close to winning a rugby cap for Scotland. This sporting prowess and a well-developed sense of humour helped to endow him with his greatest strength — his ability to communicate with the troops. He approached them on equal terms and they liked him for it.

Tom Nicol, who died following a stroke, is survived by his wife Mary, whom he married in 1942 after meeting her while stationed with the Black Watch near her home in Aberdeenshire, and by their two daughters.

CHARLES MAXWELL

Charles Maxwell, BBC Radio producer, died on August 4 aged 87. He was born on September 1, 1910.



CHARLES MAXWELL was one of the pioneers of BBC radio comedy in its golden era during and after the Second World War. He conceived and produced the mould-breaking variety show Take It From Here which ran uninterrupted from 1948 to 1959, starring Jimmy Edwards, Dick Bentley and an unknown comedienne called June Whitfield — "The Glums". The show was notable for the pairing of Frank Muir and Denis Norden as scriptwriters, whom Maxwell had brought together over a long lunch in Jermyn Street in 1947. Their writing partnership was to endure for nearly 50 years, a great source of pride to its mentor.

Take It From Here sprang from the success of one of Maxwell's wartime variety shows, Navy Mixture, which ran from 1943 to 1947, eventually giving an outlet to the talents of entertainers returning from the war. These included the unlikely radio act of a ventriloquist, Eric Barker, and Derek Guyler. Marriage Lines made household names of Richard Briers and Prunella Scales, while Maxwell also gave Dick Emery an early break, together with his young scriptwriter John Cleese.

He was promoted to Chief Producer, Light Entertain-

ment, in 1966 and for four years until he retired at the BBC compulsory retirement age of 60 oversaw such hardy perennials as I'm Sorry, I'll Read That Again and Just A Minute (still on the air today).

Charles Chalmers Maxwell was a most unlikely comedy impresario, possessing a conservative and modest nature. A proud Scot, he was the son of a distinguished solicitor and Balliol of Anstruther in Fife. Initially he was destined to succeed his father in the family practice. After school at Edinburgh Academy, he gritted his teeth and qualified in law at Edinburgh University, all the while pursuing his talent as an actor with the Edinburgh Repertory Company and broadcasting occasionally on BBC Radio Scotland.

In 1936, he persuaded his father to release him from his legal obligations, and came to London to act. He quickly realised, however, that his height — 5ft 4in — was against him. While he was appearing as the third priest in T.S. Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral at the Aldwych in 1937, his excellent speaking voice attracted the attention of a talent scout from Radio Luxembourg. Maxwell accepted a job as one of the first commercial radio disc jockeys and spent two happy years in Luxembourg. In 1939, he joined Radio International, broadcasting from Normandy to the British Expeditionary Force in France. At Radio In-

ternational his colleague and subsequently close friend was Roy Plomley. Enjoying the attention which their glamorous jobs brought them, Plomley and Maxwell amused themselves in the evenings by mixing cocktails of liquors in the colours of the dresses of the girls they entertained.

In 1940, at the time of Dunkirk, Maxwell left France hurriedly and returned to London, where, after service with the RAF, the BBC recruited him. He was to remain with the Corporation for the next 30 years.

Maxwell retained his lawyer's attention to detail and was a perfectionist in his work — often to the exasperation of his writers and artists. He was unfailingly courteous and rational, however, even when faced by the temperaments and emotions of the biggest stars of the day.

He took his pleasures equally seriously. He was a lover of photography, music, reading, and cricket — as well as all things Scottish. As a Scotsman, he derived his love of cricket from his second wife Mary, who is the sister of David Sheppard, the one-time England cricketer and former Bishop of Liverpool. This enduring and happy marriage produced a daughter and a son. He was married previously, during the war, to June Gosset, by whom he had a daughter. His wife and three children survive him.

MILESTONES



Alfred Schnittke, Russian composer, died on August 3 aged 63. He was born on November 24, 1934.

One of the most original and influential composers to emerge from the Soviet Union, Alfred Schnittke was widely hailed as the successor to Shostakovich. His large output of music combined the principles of 12-tone serialism with traditional tonality, and frequent ironic nods to earlier composers; the resulting sound was exploratory, eclectic and highly expressive. He won a large following, especially in the West. His supporters included Gennadi Rozdetsvensky and Mstislav Rostropovich, but the Soviet authorities condemned his work. A series of strokes marred his last years. Obituary published on August 4.



Richard Dunn, television executive, died on August 4 aged 54. He was born on September 5, 1943.

When Thames Television lost its London weekday broadcasting contract in 1991, after falling foul of the Government by broadcasting Death on the Rock, a documentary about the killing of three IRA suspects in Gibraltar, Richard Dunn was ready. The true reason for losing the franchise was that his bid was too low, but Dunn had half-anticipated failure and rapidly turned Thames into the country's most successful independent production company, making more money than ever. Dunn subsequently worked for Rupert Murdoch and digital television companies. Obituary published on August 6.

Todor Zhivkov, Communist leader of Bulgaria, died on August 5 aged 86. He was born on September 11, 1911.

A lifelong Communist, Todor Zhivkov became leader of Bulgaria in 1962 and followed the Soviet line slavishly for 35 years. The resulting industrial sclerosis was so bad that even the Soviet Union began to complain about the quality of Bulgarian exports. Zhivkov was reluctant to tackle the political sclerosis, though he declared a "new ideological climate" in deference to Gorbachev in the 1980s. Zhivkov and his family were accused of corruption. The subject of Julian Barnes's novel The Portuguese, he fell from power when communism collapsed in 1989. Obituary published on August 7.



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Shares rebound at the close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Table of equity prices categorized by sector: ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, BANKS, BREWERIES, PUBS & REST, BUILDING MATERIALS, CHEMICALS, CONSTRUCTION, DISTRIBUTORS, ELECTRICITY, ELECTRONIC & ELECT, ENGINEERING, ENGINEERING VEHICLES, FOOD MANUFACTURERS, HEALTHCARE, HOUSEHOLD GOODS & TEXT, INSURANCE, INVESTMENT TRUSTS, LEISURE & HOTELS, MEDIA, MINING, OIL & GAS, OTHER FINANCIAL, PHARMACEUTICALS, PRINTING & PAPER, PROPERTY, RETAILERS FOOD, RETAILERS GENERAL, SUPPORT SERVICES, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT, WATER.

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RAW DEAL 26 City whiz-kids face a new year hangover from euro excesses

BUSINESS

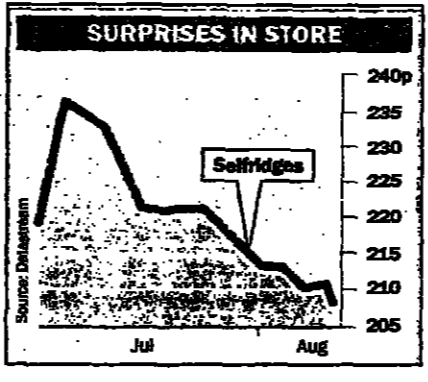
WEEKEND MONEY SECTION 2

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft SATURDAY AUGUST 8 1998

Alders warning sends retail sector reeling

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM RETAIL CORRESPONDENT ALLDERS, the department stores group, sent a shiver through the retail sector yesterday when it gave warning that its profits would not meet expectations because its July sale had gone badly.

As recently as May, Alders said that trade was going well and spoke of "confidence in the future". Yesterday it said trade had suffered since "particularly during the key selling period of the Summer sale".



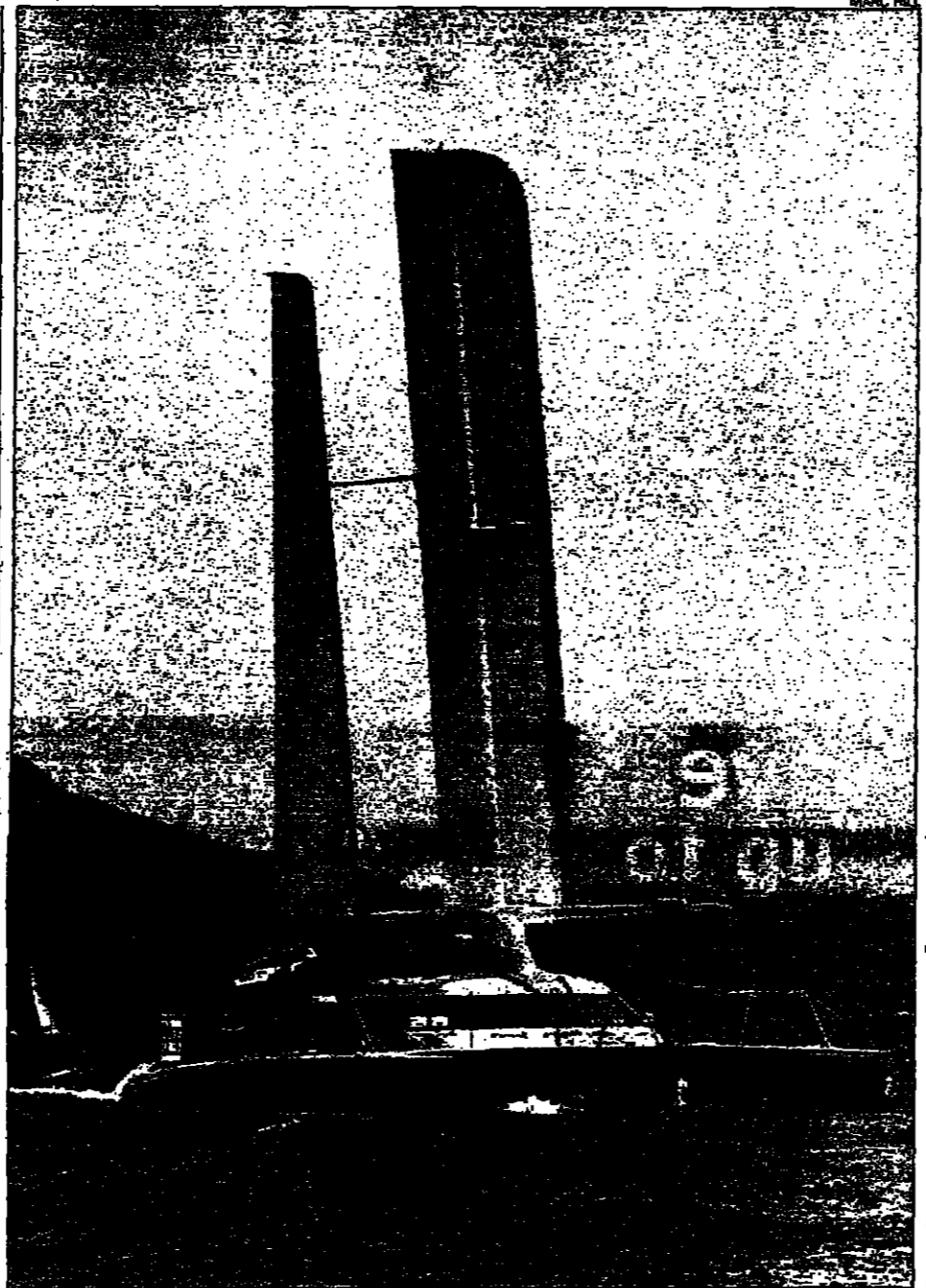
interest rate rises had been "devastating". He added: "The problem is that people remember the last recession and are taking an understandably cautious view. Nobody is going to be immune."

stores it bought, which it subsequently re-named Alders at Home, have not traded as well as hoped and would remain unprofitable until the next financial year.

84p to 212p, compared with 297p at the time of the demerger just three weeks ago. The unquoted John Lewis Partnership reported yesterday that in the first half, its sales were 5.1 per cent ahead. This is modest compared with growth of 15 per cent in the same period of last year and there is little sign of matters improving with the past week seeing sales rising only 4.7 per cent above the same week of last year.

IBM to end link with Olympic Games

FROM ANDREW BUTCHER IN NEW YORK IBM, the computer giant, abruptly ended its 38-year association with the Olympic movement yesterday, pulling out of its reputed \$100 million (£60 million) sponsorship deal.



John Walker, the designer of the controversial Walker Wingsail yacht, is forming a new company, despite the collapse of Walker Wingsail Systems, which went into liquidation yesterday.

Booker talks could lead to £600m-plus takeover

By ROBERT COLE AND FRASER NELSON BOOKER, the food wholesaling company chaired by Jonathan Taylor, has admitted it is in takeover talks. If negotiations bear fruit it could see the company being sold for upwards of £600 million.

Millennium bug bites at Unilever

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM UNILEVER, the Anglo-Dutch consumer goods group, has admitted that its worst fears have been met and that the millennium bug will cost it at least £300 million.

Nationwide lifts mortgage rates

By SUSAN EMMETT NATIONWIDE and Bradford & Bingley, the two largest remaining building societies, took advantage of the current heatwave to announce an increase in their mortgage rates yesterday.

BUSINESS TODAY

Table with financial data including FTSE 100, Dow Jones, and various market indices.

Table with financial data including London, Tokyo, and other market indices.

Taxman to enjoy taste of cereal prize

By CLARE STEWART WHEN is £100,000 not £100,000? When it comes in a cornflake pack. Kellogg's, the US cereal group whose chairman is Arnold Langbo, is currently celebrating the centenary of the cornflake with a 100th Birthday Bonanza competition.

A WEEK IN THE CITY

Banks and insurance companies spent most of the week in bed, their stomachs churning, and tempers soaring, while angry mobs of shareholders, fraud officers and debt collectors based on their front doors.

trivial when the banking sector kicked-off its reporting season. Shareholders in HSBC, the owner of Midland Bank, woke up on Monday morning to find a bulging \$1.15 billion bill squating on their doorsteps for bad debts in South-East Asia.

the banking group, disappointed the City with a surprisingly high provision of £189 million, predictably related to troubles in South-East Asia. The bank gave warning that there would be no immediate improvement in the situation.

Life of Canada became the first UK life insurance company to announce a loss related to paying the victims of the pensions mis-selling scandal.

Weekend Money, page 47



Langbo: celebration contest

Unsecured lending boosts profits at A&L

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

PROFITS at Alliance & Leicester, the former building society, rose by nearly 30 per cent for the first six months of the year.

The rise in profits to £230 million was generated by increases in unsecured lending and mortgages.

The former society, which still boasts about one million small shareholders, managed to increase its share of the mortgage market to 4.5 per cent from 4 per cent last year. Its rise in mortgage share contrasts with

the declining volumes experienced by the other newly converted building societies. Halifax and Woolwich both experienced a drop in market share because of the price war being conducted by the societies that have remained mutual, such as Nationwide and Bradford & Bingley.

Peter White, group chief executive, attacked the recent vote on mutualisation at Nationwide, in which the society managed by the slimmest of margins to retain its mutual status. He said: "The way the vote was conducted was an absolute disgrace. The voting form

was misleading and made it very difficult to vote against the board."

He also said that he would continue to scour the market for acquisitions that would enhance shareholder value. Its share price has risen by about 50 per cent since flotation at the beginning of last year.

Mr White said the Alliance & Leicester had a cash pile of about £700 million to spend on a purchase. He discounted a share buyback as a method of spending the money, but added: "Both the customer base of the Northern Rock and the Woolwich are a fit."

He also said that the group would be interested in purchasing a life insurance company. Mr White, who is 56, said: "I have two big deals in me."

The group has also managed to cut costs over the six months and Mr White vowed to keep up the pressure on costs. He said: "If we don't, somebody else will do it for us." The cost savings have been achieved through reorganising the bank's mortgage servicing operation and through job cuts.

Mr White refused to say how many jobs had been lost since conversion

but said A&L now has a staff of 8,000 compared with 11,000 four years ago.

Alliance & Leicester Personal Finance, the unsecured lending division, contributed £47 million to group profits. Gross advances were up more than 40 per cent to £654 million. Mr White said the bank would continue to monitor the quality of its unsecured lending. Any downturn in economic conditions tends to increase the default rate on this type of loan.

An interim dividend of 8p will be payable in October, up 25 per cent on last year.

Marshalls set to cut 188 processing jobs

A CHICKEN processing factory is to cut 188 jobs in Scotland with the prospect of a further 50 being lost despite the threat of closure being withdrawn. Marshall Food Group said it had reached an agreement with the Transport and General Workers' Union to reduce employee numbers from 500 to 312. Marshalls also revealed that it had rejected an offer from a prospective buyer of the plant which is in the Tayside town of Coupar Angus.

Wilson Marshall, chairman of Marshalls, said: "We deeply regret these 188 job losses ... we believe this agreement with the trade union and our employees is the best in the long-term interests of Coupar Angus." TGWU spokesman Peter Young said all the options available had been considered and that the deal struck with Marshalls was "fair under difficult circumstances". He added that the union was working hard with the management at Marshalls to turn the Coupar Angus plant into a commercially viable operation. The company announced a restructuring plan for its business on June 22. The initial plan envisaged the loss of some 170 jobs and the sale of the plant.

Johnson Service ahead

JOHNSON SERVICE, the high street dry-cleaning company formerly known as Johnson Group Cleaners, raised profits before tax and exceptional items by 17.7 per cent to £1.5 million in the six months to June 27. Earnings per share rose 18.6 per cent to 14.19p and the half-year dividend rises 10 per cent to 3.3p. The shares rose from 287½p to 295p. The company, which also has a large workwear rental business, said its work in establishing itself as a national brand would help it to get through any future economic troubles.

Newbury rights issue

NEWBURY RACECOURSE, whose shares are traded on the Oxfex market, is to raise £4.1 million through a rights issue at 37½p a share. The money is to be used to develop facilities at the Berkshire course, specifically the rebuilding of the Tattersalls Grandstand. The new £5 million development will have a three-tier structure and will hold 4,000 people. The development follows the appointment of Mark Kershaw as managing director. He was previously general manager at Ayr and Musselburgh racecourses in Scotland.

Audi accelerates

VOLKSWAGEN'S Audi subsidiary said that its first-half pre-tax profit climbed 64 per cent to DM804 million (£277 million), boosted by buoyant sales of its A6 and A8 models and increased engine production. Audi said that its robust results put it on track to post 1998 sales of more than DM25 billion (DM22.4 billion). Franz Josef Piefgen, Audi's chairman, said: "The positive development recorded for the first six months leads us to expect a strong increase in sales in 1998 compared to last year."

DBS expects progress

SHARES in DBS Management fell from 175p to 170½p after the financial group said that trading levels were "satisfactory" and that the second half would see better results. Ken Davy, the chairman, told the annual meeting that trading in the first half has been slightly softer than expected. "Nevertheless, trading levels remain satisfactory and we expect to achieve a better comparable performance in the second half," he said. On pensions, DBS said that it had increased its overall clearance rate of cases.

Indonesian banks fail

INDONESIA yesterday declared four private banks insolvent and unveiled plans to reform the ailing banking system, including the first merger between state-run institutions. The four insolvent banks were among six private institutions taken over by the Indonesian Bank Restructuring Agency four months ago. The IBRA said: "Negotiations are under way with buyers interested in acquiring some of these banks as going concerns," adding that the banks' non-performing loans will be transferred to IBRA's Asset Management Unit.

Warning for chaebols

SOUTH KOREA'S financial watchdog gave the country's top five family owned conglomerates and their creditor banks a December deadline to come up with restructuring plans. The Financial Supervisory Commission said that the so-called chaebols face punitive action, including suspension from trading, if they fail to carry out their voluntary reforms. Hyundai, Samsung, Daewoo, LG and SK will have to submit new programmes to improve their financial structures to their respective creditor banks by the end of September.

Weather hits Marston

MARSTON, THOMPSON & EVERSHED, the brewing and drinks group, suffered a 6p fall in its share price to 262½p after it said that like-for-like sales were hit by recent poor weather. However, Michael Hurdle, chairman, said the company's total retail sales for the first four months of the year were ahead as a result of the opening of new outlets. But like-for-like sales have suffered over the past two months as a result of poor weather and economic conditions in the Midlands which had affected the company's catering estate.

TBI trading on course

SHARES in TBI rose from 113p to 114½p after the airport owning property group said that trading for the year to date was in line with expectations. Stanley Thomas, chairman, said passenger numbers at Belfast International rose 9 per cent in the first quarter at Cardiff International by 8 per cent, and at Sanford International in Florida by 24 per cent against the comparable six-week period last year when it was under TBI ownership. A new check-in facility at Belfast had increased capacity from 3.6 million to five million passengers a year.

Bank	Bank	Bank
Days	Days	Days
Avonbank	2.82	2.84
Avonbank Sch.	21.39	20.72
Barclays	83.91	77.95
Caixa	2.88	2.410
Cyprus Cyp	0.8828	0.8243
Deutsche	11.42	10.78
Fidelity	9.35	9.78
France	10.15	9.40
Garnsey	3.60	2.318
Geneco	506	465
Hong Kong	13.50	12.30
Indell	1.28	1.28
Indell P.	1.2088	1.2178
Israel	8.45	8.00
Italy	9.04	8.79
Japan	262.85	257.22
Met	0.674	0.615
Netherlands	3.458	3.283
New Zealand	5.34	3.11
Norway	12.97	12.08
Paragon	338.97	288.80
S Africa	10.90	9.94
Spain	287.35	238.58
Sweden	13.58	13.8
Switzerland	2.588	2.370
Taiwan	49783	42716
USA	1.743	1.588

Rates for small denomination businesses only as quoted by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Racal falls into red after sale of division

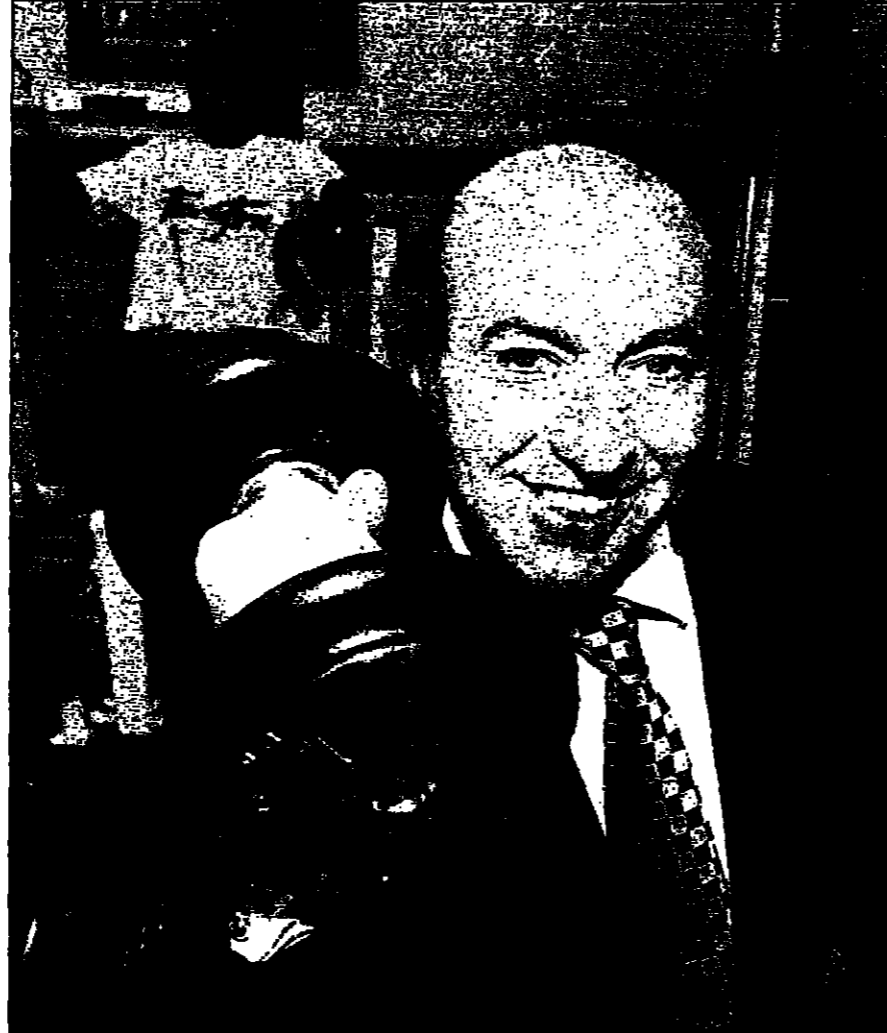
BY ADAM JONES

RACAL plunged more than £200 million into the red yesterday after managing to sell its loss-making computer network hardware business.

The sale, announced with the annual results yesterday, meant that Racal's performance, already hit by restructuring charges, was held back by a further £234 million exceptional charge.

The resulting pre-tax loss of £207 million followed a £40 million profit last year. Sales fell marginally from £1.18 billion to £1.14 billion.

Racal Data Communica-



Fitness First, where Michael Balfour is managing director, has become the first UK health club operator to enter the continental market. It paid £9.7 million for 50 per cent of Fitness Company, Germany's second-biggest health club chain. Mr Balfour and Christopher Pearce, chairman, also sold 600,000 shares each, reaping £2 million apiece. *Tempus, page 27*

Job market keeps pay pushing up

WAGE pressures and skills shortages remain acute, although the overall pace of growth in the labour market is starting to slow, a survey published yesterday shows (Alasdair Murray writes).

The Federation of Recruitment and Employment Services (NTC) July job market index registered a robust annual rate of growth of 2 per cent, although it is below its peak last summer of 3 per cent.

The survey also revealed a slight fall in average earnings growth, with the permanent salaries index slipping to 63.7, compared with a peak of 65.3 in May.

Recruitment consultancies continued to report problems finding suitable candidates to fill vacancies.

tions is being sold to Platinum Equity Holdings of the US for \$47.5 million (£28 million), with \$35 million of this comprising expected royalties.

The division's losses worsened to £53 million in 1997-98 as trading and staff retention suffered from the uncertainty over its future.

Racal said the loss on disposal, which includes £107 million of written-off goodwill, was worse than expected because it is retaining the security and payments arm, which made profits of £9.9 million last year and had not attracted a high enough bid.

Racal said it would have been more expensive to shut down the division.

Sir Ernest Harrison said he would carry on as chairman because he believed that more shareholder value would be coming through.

He is still looking for a chief executive to run the Racal Telecommunications business. The group has been looking since last December and Sir Ernest said it was difficult finding suitable candidates: "We need to get a very powerful chief executive. That takes time."

He said plans to float the business have not changed. Racal also tried to dampen speculation that WorldCom is about to make an offer for the telecoms arm, although it admitted being involved in more mundane contract discussions with the US group.

Stripping out exceptional earnings, earnings per share from continuing businesses rose from 24.88p to 24.97p.

A second interim dividend of 3.9p per share will be paid, making an unchanged total of 6p for the year.

Obuchi stakes all on rescuing Japan's troubled economy

FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

KEIZO OBUCHI, Japan's Prime Minister, yesterday vowed to stake his administration on the mission of rescuing the nation's moribund economy and strengthening the shaky financial system.

In his first policy speech to parliament, Mr Obuchi promised personal income and corporate tax cuts worth more than six trillion yen (£25.3 billion), and an extra budget of more than ¥10 trillion to stimulate the world's second-largest economy, which is crippled by bad loans and problem loans totalling at least ¥87 trillion.

Reviewing government proposals for helping banks to rid themselves of bad loans, Mr Obuchi promised quick action to introduce a "bridge bank" system (a plan unveiled by Ryutaro Hashimoto, the former Prime Minister, to take over operations of insolvent banks). He also emphasised the need to devise procedures to settle who owns property put up as collateral for unrecoverable loans — a crucial first step to solving the bad loans mess.

Outlining the tax cuts that Tokyo hopes will help to revive the economy, Mr Obuchi left no doubt that the biggest winners will be the better-off. He said that the Government would lower the maximum rate of personal income tax to 50 per cent next January from 65 per cent. He also said that the Government would cut the effective rate of corporate taxes to 40 per cent from 46.36 per cent in April.

EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER THE TIMES

FREE tickets for Metroland

AN EXCLUSIVE FILM PREVIEW AT NINE VENUES

Today *The Times* has teamed up with Metrodome Distribution to offer readers the chance to see an exclusive private screening of Metroland, the exciting new film starring Emily Watson, Christian Bale and Lee Ross. The film, which has an 18 certificate and goes on general release on August 21, is based on Julian Barnes's bestselling novel of the same name and explores what happens when two anarchic sixth formers, who rebelled against their suburban London upbringing, reach their thirties.

THE PARTICIPATING CINEMAS ARE:

Saturday August 15, 10.30am
 ● Odeon, Guildford
 ● Odeon, Southampton

Sunday August 16, 10.30am
 ● Corner House, Manchester
 ● Watershed, Bristol
 ● Showroom, Sheffield
 ● Odeon, Camden Town, London
 ● Odeon, Brighton
 ● Odeon, The Quay, Glasgow
 ● Odeon, Kensington, London

HOW TO CLAIM YOUR TICKETS

Simply take this copy of *The Times* to one of the participating cinemas, left between today, Saturday August 8, and Wednesday August 12, 1998, after 2pm. Tickets will be issued on a first-come first-served basis. One copy of today's *Times* entitles you to claim one pair of tickets for the preview screenings.

CHANGING TIMES

Ward slips on news of £12.5m writedown

BY GEORGE SIVELL

SHARES in Ward Holdings, the Kent housebuilder, fell from 43½p to 31½p yesterday after the company revealed a £12.5 million one-off writedown of the carrying cost of land and work in progress.

The writedown left the group with a loss before tax of £11.5 million in the six months to April 30 against a profit of £2 million in the first half of last year.

The writedown comes after a review of the business that began in January and included a detailed assessment of the trading potential of the group's stock of land and work in progress.

Dennis Ward, the chairman, said: "It is disappointing to have to lower our expectations in the short term but the board is convinced that the existing potential and restructuring of the group will be beneficial to the group and our shareholders in the longer term."

The company explained: "We are positioning the company for the more difficult trading period in the housing sector over the next 18 months to enable us to take advantage of the opportunities which will inevitably arise."

The half-year dividend is to be reinstated at 0.6p a share and Mr Ward said that the year-end dividend would be decided once the outcome for the second half of the year is known.

Losses per share reached 20.8p against earnings previously of 2.7p a share. Sales fell from £14.2 million to £11.3 million.

Mayflower in bid talks with Dennis

BY ADAM JONES

MAYFLOWER, maker of Walter Alexander buses, said yesterday it is in talks with Dennis, one of its chassis suppliers, that could lead to it making an offer of 450p a share, valuing Dennis at about £25 million.

Any offer would gatecrash the planned merger between Dennis and Henly's, another bus manufacturer, announced late last month.

It would also be Mayflower's first big move since John Simpson, chief executive, was prevented from launching an audacious bid for Vickers by BMW, one of Mayflower's main customers.

Mayflower said it was considering offering cash with a full share or loan note alternative. It is understood that Mr Simpson approached Dennis the day after the Henly's merger plan was announced.

The Walter Alexander subsidiary was one of the strongest performers within the Mayflower group, according to the annual results released earlier this week, and it is currently pushing for bus orders in Hong Kong.

Mr Simpson said that Mayflower, which makes panels for Rolls-Royces, Benleys and Rovers, would afford between £200 million and £300 million on acquisitions.

Henly's has offered 64 Henly's shares for every 100 Dennis shares. The value of this deal fell yesterday as Henly's shares dropped from 590p to 520p in response to the statement by Mayflower to the market.

At this level, the original Henly's offer, which is due to be put before an extraordinary meeting of shareholders on August 17, would value Dennis at about £184 million. Dennis shares rose from 394p to 450p, while Mayflower was down 2p at 192p.

There are several institutions, such as Prudential, M&G and Standard Life, who have substantial shareholdings in both Dennis and Henly's, but industry insiders said yesterday that it was clear that Henly's would have to consider raising its offer.

Dennis issued a statement that said it "noted" the unsolicited interest from Mayflower regarding a possible recommended offer. It added: "The board of the company are considering this approach. In the meantime, shareholders are advised to take no action."



Simpson: up to £300m to spend

City's last bombsite set for the builders

City's last bombsite set for the builders

Garage

Business, The Sunday Times tomorrow

سكس (عن لايدي)

Niall FitzGerald's revelation that Unilever is expecting to spend £300 million on preparing its systems to cope with the dawn of the new millennium may have more effect in waking up business to the perils of the bug than the Government's belated advertising campaign.

That a manufacturing business, not a bank, is putting the bug on the map - and internally admitting that the eventual cost could be closer to £500 million - demonstrates how serious the problem may be. FitzGerald is not a scare-monger by nature but he is concerned by the lack of impetus to fight the bug that he sees in some quarters. And, since no business functions in isolation, the laxity of others will take its toll of those who have done all they can to prepare.

The potential for the bug to disrupt business is enormous. At NatWest, where an early start on tackling the problem is credited with having kept the cost down to around £50 million, the effects of the bug are partially responsible for a forecast that growth in the economy will be held to around a meagre 1 per cent. But even that may look optimistic if the bug proves as bad as some pessimists fear.

It seems that the Chancellor, who tends to such a gloomy view on matters such as pay and productivity, is making no allowance for the possible effects of the

The bug that killed the Budget

COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

bug when he produces the economic forecast to justify his new, extravagant spending plans. A few words with FitzGerald might give him cause for concern. If, as the pessimists think, infrastructure is not properly prepared for the change of date, then business could shudder to an abrupt halt.

There are also fears that investors may start to withdraw their cash from the banking system as the century ends.

If some businesses have been slow in realising the need to seek out their embedded chips, then central and local government has been slower. London Electricity is now said to be so fearful of the traffic chaos that could welcome in 2000 that it is laying on mountain bikes for its staff to use pedal power to reach the sub-stations which may need urgent attention.

While Unilever shareholders may shudder at the cost of their company's preparations for coping with the looming threat of millennium meltdown, they should applaud the foresight behind the moves. The organisation still has a corporate structure which a management consultant could not have devised even on a bad day, but, despite the rather, downbeat statement

yesterday, a modern, streamlined business now beats below its Anglo-Dutch carapace.

After the sale of the speciality chemicals division, this is a consumer products company which knows how to trade in world markets. Under the energetic FitzGerald, it has invested heavily in product development and come up with some winners. Taco tea-cream may not be to everyone's taste, but it will be a big profit earner internationally.

Retailers out of fashion

While Vittorio Raddice has been doing his best to turn Selfridges into the most glamorous emporium in town, the newly floated Selfridges shares have looked like last year's grunge. Enthusiasm for the stock has been so lacking that the company is now valued at less than its net assets. The flotation was a core part of

Sir Bob Reid's strategy for enhancing shareholder value at Sears, so, judging on past performance, a steady downward progression of the price was fairly predictable.

But, at this level, Selfridges must look a little more tempting to prospective purchasers than some of its merchandise. Raddice's ideas may have been an extravagant way of alienating customers and losing sales, but this is not a business to be looked at solely in terms of current trading. The Oxford Street property is a unique site. While there may be few retailers who might want to take it on, particularly at this stage in the economic cycle, property companies and the private equity funds, awash with cash and a dearth of deserving causes on which to spend it, will be doing the sums on how the site could be put to maximum use.

A creative approach will be essential because the outlook for the store itself is pretty dismal. The gloomy news from Alders

yesterday merely voiced the pain that has been afflicting the retail sector generally in recent months. While Gordon Brown and the MPC have been worrying about the consumer boom, those who should have been benefiting from it have seen no sign of a shopping spree. Their hopes had been pinned on appealing to the bargain-hunting instinct of consumers with heavily discounted prices in the summer sales.

The public, however, has chosen to spend its cash on foreign holidays to bring reprieve from the gloomy British summer, or conserve it. Consumer confidence has ebbed away and retailers are the losers. They now face the autumn weighed down with heavy stocks of summer clothing and the analysts are already talking their red pencils to the profit forecasts with all the vigour that the retailers have been applying to their price tickets.

House of Fraser, where the more design conscious teenage scribbles would have been able

to replenish their designer wardrobes at knock-down prices of late, continues to insist that sales are up on a year ago, but margins must be feeling the pain. And the Malaysians who so generously bailed out Laura Ashley earlier this year are now more likely to get their reward in heaven than in dividends.

Byers the Senior Housemaster

Stephen Byers, the newly appointed Chief Secretary to the Treasury, has put his year at the Department of Education to good use. There was a distinctly schoolmasterly tone to his first major economics speech yesterday as he quickly adopted the role of Senior Housemaster. Gordon Brown's Headmaster. Bad behaviour, such as paying higher wages, will lead to rising interest rates and fewer jobs, he argued, while the prefects of industry were given a particularly stern talking-off for not showing enough "responsibility".

The Government is right to define earnings as the main threat to the economy. The Bank of England resisted the temptation to raise rates this week, but unless

average earnings growth falls swiftly - starting with next week's data - rates could yet go higher. However, beyond slapping a few wrists, the Government seems to have very little to offer. A national wages policy is politically impossible and business is becoming frustrated by the Government's censorious manner. Recent research on bonuses and productivity has demonstrated the problem is more complex than the Government would have us believe. There also remains the simple logic that in a tight labour market businesses have no choice but to raise wages. Real solutions, such as improved training, will take time to have an effect. In the meantime, Government hectoring is unlikely to deter fat cats from enjoying a little more cream.

Dealing with dad

TONY K. PIDGLEY may well be the best candidate for the job of managing director of Berkeley Homes, although it is unlikely that the job was widely offered. But the advancement of the boss's son in a public company still rightly raises eyebrows. It was a weak spot with Lords Westminster, Hanson and Forté. At Sainsbury, the family has wisely decided to bow out. Tony K. has proved that he can run a housebuilding business, but working with dad may be even harder.

City's last bomb site set for the builders

By Carl Mortished

BERKELEY GROUP, the housebuilder run by Tony W. Pidgley, has decided to bring the chief executive's son into the boardroom by acquiring Thirstone Group, a private housebuilder owned and managed by Tony K. Pidgley.

Berkeley is paying £15 million for Thirstone, which was established eight years ago by Mr Pidgley Jr with the help of an £8 million private loan from his father, Graham Roper, Berkeley's chairman. He explained that he was the architect of the deal: "This has not been Tony's idea. I wanted Tony Jr on the board. He is a very unusual and gifted developer."

Mr Roper also reckons that bringing the 29-year-old Mr Pidgley on to the board will bring younger talent into the firm. "We have a number of elderly people on the board - we are all on the downhill slope of our careers."

Mr Pidgley Jr will be managing director of Berkeley Homes, replacing John Jacobs, who is leaving to set up his own operation with the backing of Berkeley Group.

Relations between father and son have not always been smooth. Housebuilders love to regale each other with anecdotes about watching the Pidgeleys gawp each other.

Mr Pidgley Sr is reputed to be a hard and aggressive negotiator, a man who has added new lustre to the phrase "rough diamond". He was a Barnardos boy until adopted by a family of travellers and learnt his business sense from his father's haulage business. He later moved into site preparation for building firms and eventually joined Crest.

He is legendary in the building sector for having the nous to sell his land bank at the top of the housing boom in 1988, but being contrary does not make him easy to deal with.

Mr Roper said: "The person who has given me most difficulty about this is Tony [Mr Pidgley Sr]. He was not at all comfortable with this. I think Tony Jr will have quite a tough time."

The elder Mr Pidgley is, according to Mr Roper, worried that bringing his son on board will lead to allegations of nepotism. However, the Berkeley chairman reckons that the younger man has proved himself with Thirstone.

Mr Pidgley Jr started work at Berkeley Homes but left the company at the age of 21 when his father told him to set up on his own.

Thirstone operates in Surrey, building homes with an average value of £400,000. It is small, selling 48 units last year and made profits of £2.7 million, expected to rise to more than £3 million this year. However, it has won numerous prizes.

Indeed, sources close to the company suggest that Thirstone may have received an offer from another housebuilder. That might have left Mr Pidgley Sr in a quandary. With almost £8 million of his own money in the company and a son at the helm, could Mr Pidgley Sr allow this investment to be snapped up by someone else?

Thirstone deal sees Berkeley chief's son climb on board

By Carl Mortished



Tony Pidgley Jr has earned a reputation as an "unusual and gifted developer" during his time at the helm of Thirstone

Harveys made to rewrite its accounts

By Graham Seajean

HARVEYS FURNISHING, the retail group put together by Lord Harris of Peckham and chaired by Sir Harry Solomon, has been forced to issue a 13-page rewrite of its 1997 accounts because they failed to comply properly with accounting standards.

The Financial Reporting Review Panel has ruled that the group made a mistake in principle in accounting for its July 1996 takeover of Lord Harris's Harveys Furnishing business, which gave the enlarged group its present name.

The Panel has also noticed a series of apparently sloppy elements in the accounts which failed to apply the letter of compulsory accounting standards. Among other solecisms, these invalidate both the company's cash flow statement and its profit and loss account and fail to comply with the accounting standard on deals with related interests.

The long list of errors or omissions, albeit mostly minor, is likely to embarrass Coopers & Lybrand, the auditor, which has now merged with Price Waterhouse.

In a 13-page supplementary note to the Harveys accounts for the year to April 1998, which corrects the errors, the board claims that the changes do not affect reported profits, earnings per share, net assets or shareholders' funds.

The main impact of the changes appears to be on the balance sheet make-up. An extra £22 million of it will now be goodwill arising from the takeover, which has to be justified by trading prospects or depreciated out of future profits.

The trouble arose because the quoted company, originally called Cantors, made a reverse takeover of the bigger Harveys, whose shareholders were destined to control the enlarged concern. The deal was struck when Cantors shares stood at £1. By the time the acquisition was made, however, Cantors shares had risen to 165p, valuing Harveys's £2.3 million profit at £55 million. It was decided to account for the fair value of the acquisition as if shares were issued at £1 each.

The panel said this was wrong in principle under Financial Reporting Standard 7. The company and its auditors should have accounted for the value of what was paid, not the valuation of Harveys. As if to prove the panel right, the shares of the enlarged group now stand at 177½p, in spite of the trading difficulties. In between, they topped 343p.



Lord Harris: group founder

Gates loses fight to limit questioning in court

IN ANOTHER setback to Microsoft's defence of monopoly charges, US Justice Department lawyers have been granted unlimited time to question Bill Gates, the software group's chairman.

A US District Court judge in Washington DC, has rejected Mr Gates's plea for an eight-hour time limit on the questioning that will start on Wednesday in depositions with Justice Department officials. The questioning is part of the US Government's case against Microsoft for alleged

Gates loses fight to limit questioning in court

violations of monopoly laws. The charges will go to trial in September.

Judge Thomas Penfield also ordered Microsoft to hand over to the Justice Department the secret source codes which form the basis of the Windows operating system.

Microsoft sought assurances that the computer experts who will study the source codes, which are the blueprint for the Windows software, would not be from rival software companies.

Microsoft also asked that the experts be banned from working for rivals for 18 months after looking at the codes. The judge rejected the request for such an embargo.

Lawyers for Microsoft said they would ask Judge Penfield on Monday to summarily throw out key parts of the Government's case against the company. The lawyers will argue the Government is wrong to suggest the company acted illegally by bundling its Microsoft Explorer Internet software with its Windows operating system.

Heywood completes £77m sale

HEYWOOD WILLIAMS, the building products group, has completed the sale of Auto Windscreens to HSBC Private Equity for £77.2 million (Adam Jones writes).

Heywood said in April that it was selling the windscreens replacement company, no longer seen as a core business. Auto Windscreens had 1997 operating profits of £5.4 million on turnover of £71.3 million. At the year end it had £15.3 million net assets.

Disposal proceeds more than offset higher borrowing after the purchase of Spectrus Kestrel earlier this year.

Filtronic surges on news of agreement with Nokia

SHARES in Filtronic, a maker of mobile telephone components, soared 20 per cent yesterday after it announced its second international acquisition in a week.

Filtronic, based in Yorkshire, said it had agreed with Nokia, the Finnish communications group, to acquire its subsidiary LK-Products, a maker of filters and antennae for mobile phones.

The English group said it would finance the £8 million deal through a combination of cash and the issue of four million new shares, giving Nokia a 7.5 per cent stake in the group.

Four days ago, Filtronic announced it was to buy Litor Solid State, a semiconductor company for £26 million. The company's shares have gained nearly 35 per cent since the beginning of the week, closing yesterday at 568p.

Filtronic, which supplies the transmit and receive components for cellular base stations to Nokia from its Shipley plant, hopes the deal will foster a closer relationship with the telecommunications giant. LK

Investors back Wingsail inventor

SHAREHOLDERS who lost millions of pounds with the collapse of Walker Wingsail Systems (WWS) yesterday showed strong support for its founder's plans to restart the company under a slightly different name.

WWS was behind a revolutionary yacht shortlisted for the Millennium Exhibition, which yesterday went into voluntary liquidation after 16 years and £13 million of investment.

John Walker, founder of WWS and inventor of the computer-controlled wingsail, blamed a collapse in investor

Investors back Wingsail inventor

confidence in WWS on the bad publicity received since being chosen as an official Millennium Product by the Design Council. He also blamed rebel shareholders who he insists are trying to wrest control of the patents for his invention. However, Mr Walker went on to explain that, after the liquidation of WWS, he intends to continue developing his yacht with a new company called Walker Wingsail International.

Although a group of rebel shareholders were openly incensed by the thought of Mr Walker walking away from the failed company simply to set up another company, attracting yet

Investors back Wingsail inventor

more investment, it became clear that they were in the minority.

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Investors back Wingsail inventor

The declaration was greeted with a cheering round of applause.

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An admiring shareholder shakes hands with John Walker at the liquidation meeting

INVESTORS who lost millions of pounds with the collapse of Walker Wingsail Systems (WWS) yesterday showed strong support for its founder's plans to restart the company under a slightly different name.

WWS was behind a revolutionary yacht shortlisted for the Millennium Exhibition, which yesterday went into voluntary liquidation after 16 years and £13 million of investment.

John Walker, founder of WWS and inventor of the computer-controlled wingsail, blamed a collapse in investor confidence in WWS on the bad publicity received since being chosen as an official Millennium Product by the Design Council. He also blamed rebel shareholders who he insists are trying to wrest control of the patents for his invention. However, Mr Walker went on to explain that, after the liquidation of WWS, he intends to continue developing his yacht with a new company called Walker Wingsail International.

Although a group of rebel shareholders were openly incensed by the thought of Mr Walker walking away from the failed company simply to set up another company, attracting yet more investment, it became clear that they were in the minority.

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صكذامن لاصهل

City traders braced for new year hangover from excesses of EMU

Rachel Bridge
on the sober practicalities of the switch to the single currency

If you are looking for a good time this New Year's Eve then make sure you do not end up spending it with the whiz-kids in charge of carrying out the City's transition to cope with European economic and monetary union. For, while everyone else will be popping champagne corks happy in the knowledge that they will have the whole weekend to recover from their excesses, the boys and girls in charge of making the City's systems euro-friendly will be setting their alarm clocks early in order to spend the next three days in the office.

Already dubbed "Le Week-end" by the French, the days leading up to the start of monetary union on January 4 promise to be something of a logistical nightmare, as City firms race to adapt their systems in time for the big day.

Although the transition to the first phase of the euro does not require any great technological advances, it nevertheless poses one of the biggest organisational challenges that the Square Mile has had to deal with. And, although some changes can be put in place before the big day, the final EMU conversion rates will not be announced until the afternoon of December 31, meaning that there will have to be a lot of last-minute changes.

Juan Amador, associate partner at Andersen Consulting, the management consultant, reckons that a typical investment bank will have to change up to 200 different internal systems in order to be able to cope with monetary union — and that up to 50,000 City employees will have to come into work over the conversion weekend to ensure that things go smoothly.

He said: "It will be a weekend where pretty much everyone in the industry will have to be at work — everybody will have to change something. In terms of



City whiz-kids will miss out on traditional new year celebrations not just in 1999 but at the start of the millennium too

technology there is not much that is new but every institution that operates globally will have a substantial number of systems that need to be changed — and by my knowledge nobody has ever tried to change so many systems at the same time. It is a very complex changeover, it happens in a very short period of time and once you are into that weekend there is no room for error. If anything goes wrong you can't just say, 'I'm sorry, let me try again.' You are pretty much committed to it."

Señor Amador outlines an action-packed timetable for the conversion weekend, involving firms inputting euro rates into their systems, amending redenominated trades and positions, calculating the euro equivalent of regular month-end adjusting transactions and creating conversion amendment transactions.

Indeed, Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, one of the City's big-

gest investment banks, began block booking hotel rooms in the City in January in order to accommodate staff who will be required to work over conversion weekend.

A spokesman for the bank says that the sheer logistical planning for the conversion weekend is proving to be an immense task, not least in terms of making sure that there will be enough food, heating, security guards and photocopying maintenance men on hand to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

He said: "We have been thinking about this since the beginning of the year. It is something that has never been done before — to a degree you don't know exactly what is going to happen and the message that we are putting out to our clients and internally is the importance of minimising risk."

Hotellers are saying that there is not a room to be had in London over Le Week-end and

pizza-delivery firms are expecting a boom.

The London Stock Exchange too has been working overtime to try to minimise the expected chaos on Le Week-end, sending out reams of detailed advice to City firms engaged in the business of converting their systems and even advising them not to reconfirm or renotify open trades once they have been transacted in order to reduce the number of communications going through the system that weekend.

Deutsche Bank has spent the past couple of years preparing for euro conversion weekend — at a total cost of some DM400 million (£135 million) — and plans to have thousands of employees in the office all weekend to ensure that everything goes according to plan. Laurence Horobin, Deutsche Bank's global custody EMU co-ordinator, said wryly: "We are currently going through a process of looking

for volunteers to work that weekend and if we don't get enough we will be encouraging people in other ways. It is probably the largest corporate event in history. We are converting to the euro in about 26 different countries where we have clients that have European securities so it is quite a mammoth task in terms of co-ordination, let alone the actual operational effort to do it and the IT effort to support it."

Deutsche Bank is hoping that by developing its own euro-compliant processing system — called "x8 trader" — to upgrade its existing in-house operating system, it has avoided the potential pitfalls of relying on an outside party to provide the necessary software.

Mr Horobin said: "Not having a third-party company providing software that may or may not work helps because you can get things resolved much quicker and it is obviously an advantage because you can

control the requirements and make sure we get what we want. And the fact that our business does not rely on a non-Deutsche entity to provide the software is comforting in terms of risk management."

Indeed, risk management has played an important part in Deutsche Bank's preparations for euro conversion weekend. Early on it decided that it would not assume that its clients would be equally ready to deal in euros from January 4, a decision that has effectively given it a built-in contingency plan but has cost it hundreds of thousands of dollars in providing additional functionality.

Mr Horobin said: "We are not assuming that all of our clients will convert to the euro on day one because there is no compulsion for them to do so. So we will continue to be able to accept trade instructions and pay money for them and account in any currency they like and we will automatically convert between the legacy currencies and the euro."

"It is kind of an insurance for us against our clients not being ready and insurance for our clients that we can stand between them and the financial markets."

Señor Amador, who has spent the past few years for Andersen advising firms on conversion to EMU, says that the mood in the financial community has sharply changed as the big day approaches. He said: "This time last year there were probably quite a few sceptics about whether the euro would start on time, but now everybody is working quite hard to be ready for January 1, 1999. The ones who were the sceptics last year are probably the ones working hardest now because they need to catch up. It is going to be hard, and some people will find it harder than others."

The good news for City institutions is that once the new systems are in place it will be relatively straightforward to adapt them to the arrival of other currencies and currencies as they join up for economic and monetary union.

The bad news for the technological whiz-kids though is that they will forgo their New Year's Eve celebrations all over again next year in order to prepare for the arrival of 2000.

French leave

FUN and games at *The European*, where Andrew Neil is casting around for a partner — a big European publisher probably — to stem the endless losses. No one is saying much and Neil is in France at present, but there has been some inaccurate reporting in the French press and much talk that Neil is trying to arrange a management buyout.

The truth seems to be that he is talking to three possible joint venture partners with a view to splitting the ownership three ways, between the Barclay brothers, who now own it, Neil himself and the new shareholder. There are rumours going around the building in Grays Inn Road, a former home of *The Times*, that the whole shooting match is off to Docklands, but this seems wide of the mark, not least because none of the people Neil is talking to is based there. And then there is talk, also emanating from France, that Bloomberg is about to become involved, notwithstanding the US information group's relationship with the *Independent on Sunday*.

A pan-European partner, with ad sales and distribution network already in place, would bring the chance that *The European* may even turn a modest profit — its first. Expect a firm decision by the end of September.

PROOF, if proof were needed, that there are some very rich and very silly people in the City. *Krug, the champagne*, have celebrated their 300th anniversary by issuing some special gift packs of their already fabulously expensive *Krug Clos du Mesnil champagne*. Only 14,000 bottles of the stuff are made each year, and just 300 of the gift packs, which contain three different vintages, were created. Thirty were earmarked for the UK, and the whole lot have been grabbed by *Uncorked*, the Swiss wine merchant in Broadgate. Twenty sold, the rest ordered and on their way. The cost: £599 each. I predict fights when the last few finally arrive.

Tiny sums
OUR LAST reminiscence, of *Tiny Rowland*, who died a fortnight ago, takes us to Zeira and a flight back from that misbegotten country. *Tiny* is missing about President Mubutu, whom he has just met: "Poor old bloke. He lives on a



boat in the middle of the river of his home village. Even there he thinks everybody is out to get him. Which they are.

"The Americans say he's stolen millions of dollars, but he showed me. We were on our hands and knees in his state cabin, and he'd got all his bank accounts out. We totted them all up — he's only got \$250 million. He's a poor man!"

ANYONE unduly concerned about a *Berkeley Group* board dominated by *Pidgley* should reflect on the following true story about the veteran house-builder: *Pidgley Junior* went to his father for advice, pleased as punch about an excellent site he was planning to buy. The young man approached the site owner, only to find his father had beaten him to it. Old man *Pidgley's* advice to his son? "Never ever tell anyone about your deals and let that be a lesson to you."

Rival claims
DEAR old John Beckwith is back in the news — though not as often as his niece Tamara. The old London & Edinburgh Trust boss had hardly seen the ink dry on the flotation of his Sports & Outdoor Media group when he turned to one of Britain's great landmarks. In association with Leon Black, the Wall Street arbitrageur, Roger Orr, the Goldman Sachs partner, and DG, the German bank, he is buying £22 million for Piccadilly Plaza in Manchester.

This 1960s mansard is to be redeveloped at a cost of about £60 million. While Beckwith and co are performing this public service, I hope they put up a plaque to commemorate the career of John Beckwith's great rival, Nick Lesiau, of Burford and Prestwich Holdings fame.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

CULTURE
Cameron Diaz is in the rudest film in America. How come?

MAGAZINE
Offside: is it time the FA's Graham Kelly took an early bath?

STYLE
Clown princes: the designer duo giving fashion the hump

PLUS
Free 40-page X-Files magazine and: News, Sport, News Review, Business, Money, Travel Books, The Sunday Times and Appointments

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

An acquisitive man of many car parts

Chris Swan is not used to business failure so it will be an odd sensation this weekend when he contemplates the collapse of his plans to create an FTSE 250 company.

Mr Swan, chairman and managing director of Finelist, the car parts group, has been one of the great entrepreneurial success stories of the nineties, a whirlwind of acquisitions.

However, his latest proposal — to merge with UK rival Partco and create a £400 million company — was roughly rejected on Thursday. The rebuff from Partco bluntly suggested that Mr Swan has already overstretched himself and his businesses have never delivered organic growth.



Finely tuned: Chris Swan says he works "like a nutter"

12-year-old, did them up and flogged them for a profit. He then took a job at Halfords and worked his way up.

Finelist is based in Stratford-upon-Avon and his working hours belie the town's rather dreamy feel. He says: "Usually, I'm in the office at about 7am on Monday to Friday. I work like a nutter."

He knows how to work the system," one observed, "but he's the sort of person you wouldn't want to cross."

He has only one non-executive directorship — a venture capital company called Springboard that has just listed on the AIM. He says it is "basically designed to help people do management buy-outs."

For someone who made so much money at such a young age — he is only 40 — Mr Swan has shown no signs of slowing down and living off his prior achievements.

IN THE HOT SEAT
Born: Birmingham, May 2, 1958. Education: Abbey High School, Kenilworth, Warwickshire. Gave up chance to study at Bath University in favour of joining Halfords management training scheme. Career: Headed a management buyout of Autolea, a car components company. Autolea was reversed into Finelist, a quoted shell, in 1994, and the business has grown through acquisitions.

THE TIMES SATURDAY

STOCK

COMPASS
as bargain

ADAM JONES

Compass points the way as bargain-hunters strike

LONDON'S shares started to reverse six successive days of decline yesterday, as the scrappy buying which had been lifting a few dozen second-line stocks gave way to bargain-hunting in the FTSE 100.

Almost every blue-chip stock which suffered the worst falls during the week was taken straight back up, on hopes that London shares have taken their breather and are now ready for another sprint.

Egged on by strong trade in Wall Street, the FTSE 100 advanced 36.3 points to close at 5,680.40. But trade was thin, and the heavy-spending institutions preferred to speculate.

Compass Group was by far the best performer, jumping 50p to 588p after the company hit out against the "sell" note from Kleinwort Benson, which dragged its shares down by about the same amount on Thursday.

Ron Morley, Compass company secretary, took the unusual step of addressing Kleinwort's points — particularly the concern that its shares contained too much hope of a takeover from Rentokil Initial, up 2p to 36p.

"We don't think there is much bid premium," he said. "We have never had any contact at all with Rentokil."

Normally, erratic share price swings are blamed on the SETS trading system. But this was the real thing, as there was heavy trade in its shares all the way from 538p to the 588p close.

The other main FTSE movers were reclaiming ground lost since Monday. Nymcoed Amersham gained 28p to 406p. Vodafone rebounded from 76p to 80p and Shell sprang back 20p to 370p helped by an upgrade from Goldman Sachs.

A few dealers are getting excited about results from British Airways on Monday. The shares added 21p to 591p, and short-term targets of 650p were being mentioned in some quarters. Morgan Stanley are said to have upgraded to "outperform".

Pearson, off another 15p to 107.75, has apparently caught the pity of Charterhouse Tilney, after a sharp share slide after its results.

The broker is thought to have told clients to switch from Reed International, off 12p to 56p.



his "awesome foursome" — including MicroFocus, 7p better at 462p. He plans to identify the other two later on.

Prism Rail, whose finance director is Bob Holmes, joined the full list five weeks ago and yesterday said it has appointed HSBC as its adviser to prepare the train operator "for the next stage of development".

This was read by some as "to sniff out a generous takeover offer" — and its shares shot up 22p to 392p accordingly.

Capitalised at £100 million, it would make a billion-sized snack for Stagecoach, up 5p to £12.59 after taking a nasty beating during the past two weeks.

But Giles Fearnley, Prism's chief executive, said yesterday that it has had "no takeover offers at all" since flotation. He said a bid was the last thing on his mind when appointing HSBC.

An arbitrage scam has opened up in Independent Energy Holdings, an electricity supply company listed on New York's Nasdaq exchange and London's Alternative Investment Market (AIM). In Wall Street, its share have gained 10 per cent up on the week but on AIM they have remained stagnant.

Card Clear, the credit card fraud prevention company, is beginning to be forgiven for losing two directors for misrepresenting financial information.

Dealers say the reputation blow has been severe, but it is now finding some supporters who lifted the shares 5p to 62p.

There is also some hope that Ask Central may be nearing the end of its poor share run. It added 20p to 362p after some of the original buyers, who had piled in when the shares were trading at 60p, began to take positions around 350p.

□ GILT-EDGED: Very little moved in the futures pit, as dealers took stock of the decision to leave interest rates unchanged.

Treasury 6 per cent 2028 held at £109.95 and Treasury 10 per cent 2001 added one tick to £107.15.

□ NEW YORK: A benign unemployment report urged investors back to shares after steep declines earlier in the week.

By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was up 109.42 points at 8,687.10.

Giles Fearnley, left, and Bob Holmes saw Prism Rail surge

Shire Pharmaceutical claimed back about half the ground lost since its profits warning, adding 20 per cent to 356p.

The profit warning from Alders knocked its shares off 50p to a new low of 139p and dealt another hammer blow to most other retailers. House of Fraser was worst hit, down 9p to 125p. Debenhams was another 6p down to 327p and Heat's lost 2p to 160p. The one beneficiary was Bentsalls, which added 5p to 99p.

In the computer sector, FI Group finally fell foul of the bears who have been taking profits from the sector.

Its shares, which had kept their momentum when all around were losing theirs, dropped 57p, closing at £18.30.

Sema continued its slide.

and is now 16 per cent off its peak — the worst bear run since it joined the market.

Other sufferers included Sage Group, down 30p to £16.25. Sherwood International, off 7p to 87p and Admiral, 17p off at £13.60. The newly floated Computacenter lost 22p to reach a new low of 682p.

In the neighbouring electronic equipment sector, shares fared much better. Filtronix's Nokia deal lifted its shares 98p to 568p — on the same day as a buy note from Keith Woolcock, who joined Nomura yesterday from Merrill Lynch.

Mr Woolcock said the company is "the cheapest way into the breakthrough expansion of mobile telephony" and rated the shares as "50 to 100 per cent undervalued".

He says Filtronix is part of

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

Company	Change	Reason
Compass	+50p	Takeover from Laporte
MicroFocus	+7p	Banking facilities withdrawn
Filtronix	+98p	Buys US semiconductor firm
Zelmac	+142p	Warning on strength of staffing
Dennis	+45p	Bid from Mayflower
Alders	-50p	Profits warning
Booker	+33p	Bid hopes
Sema Group	-57p	Profit-taking on sector
Wywiele Gen Cos	-250p	Better than expected results

NEW YORK

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 8697.10 (+109.42)
S&P Composite 1100.35 (+10.92)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 15826.17 (+7.05)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 7018.61 (+235.95)

Amsterdam:
AEX Index 1179.39 (+16.47)

Sydney:
DAX 2999.0 (+3.4)

Frankfurt:
DAX 5881.22 (+43.58)

Singapore:
Straits 1039.27 (+26.51)

Brussels:
BEL20 3496.35 (+42.53)

Paris:
CAC-40 4041.88 (+73.28)

Zurich:
SIX Gen 1613.40 (+16.30)

London:
FTSE 100 5680.40 (+36.3)
FTSE 250 3232.0 (+12.6)
FTSE 1000 2721.6 (+5.1)
FTSE 1000-100 2792.67 (+45.1)
FTSE All-Share 2640.68 (+32.18)
FTSE Non Financials 2712.15 (+36.15)
FTSE Food Index 144.46 (+0.08)
FTSE Govt Sec 105.93 (+0.08)
Bargains 5962
EQ4 Volume 14326 (+0.0001)
USQ Volume 2,993 (+0.0001)
German Mark 2,993 (+0.0001)
Swiss Franc 1.63 (+0.0001)
Euro (against official close) 1.63
Euro (against official close) 1.63
LECU 1.472
LESD 1.224
RFX 163.4 Jun (2.7%) Jun 1997-100
RFX 161.1 Jun (2.8%) Jun 1997-100

ADVAL GROUP

Anglo Siberian Oil	107p
Biocrop Wts	10
British Rgnl Air	152
CCM Distribution	17p
Chandos A Wts	12p
City Gourmet	56
Coca-Cola (160)	174
Downstx	26
BCsoft	1920
Game	181p
Hidden Hearing	180p
MFCP Non Cum Pt B	95
Martin Cur Hg Ic	103
Mutual Financial	10
Polley Master Grp	202p
Premier Direct Grp	182p
Quanta	120p
Seltridges (233)	207p
Sodra Petroleum	52p
Spragbold Vent Mang	147p
SupaRule	100p
Syndct Cp Wt 98/02	23p
Torotrak	262p
Touchstone	128p
Utd Biotech Red B	29p
Williams Pt B	34

Metrolite n/p (250)

Metrolite n/p (250)	68p
Pressac n/p (180)	23p
Torotrak n/p (300)	23p
Wellington n/p (210)	11

RISKS

Shire Pharms	358p (+63p)
OEM	45p (+9p)
Dennis	45p (+8p)
Banks SC	175p (+15p)
Haywood Williams	245p (+17p)
Booker	242p (+15p)

FALLS

Ward Holdings	31p (-12p)
Aldens	139p (-50p)
Herys	529p (-61p)
REA	135p (-10p)

Closing Prices Page 22

Clearing the air

ANNUAL results yesterday from Rascal Electronics were weighed down by a whopping great exceptional charge, a by-product of the need to get rid of the loss-making data communications business. This had been a cash cow in previous decades when modems were in their infancy. Latterly, in the current competitive climate, it was a major liability.

The cost of exit was more than expected and Rascal shares duly sank in morning trading. By the afternoon they were looking a lot perkier — although still down on the opening price — as the benefits of the move became more apparent. Motorola was unable to sell a similar business and had to take the costlier route of closure.

Also significant of course is that, painful as the disposal was, it removes a "poison pill" that discouraged groups such as GEC or BAE

from bidding for Rascal. Rascal was claiming yesterday that the MoD would look askance on a merger of its defence electronics business with GEC. That has got to be hogwash given George Robertson's public cries of "rationalise or die". Having said that, Rascal would benefit from fending off a defence-led merger for a while. It has a valuable presence in the consortium that will make the new battlefield radio, something GEC decries. It also has several other defence contracts that could come up soon, driving up the price to a bidder, and there are plenty of candidates to play off against each other.

Trading on about 18 times current year earnings estimates, the shares are worth holding on to. Were it not for the wider market volatilities, they could merit a buy recommendation.

A&L

IT HAS been a profitable 12 months for the one million or so Alliance & Leicester customers who held on to the shares handed out when the building society demerged. Even after recent falls, the stock has gained almost 50 per cent.

The experience of Woolwich shareholders has been less fruitful. Even discounting the pricing anomaly on flotation day, it has struggled to keep pace with the stock market average.

One clear reason behind the market's preference for Alliance & Leicester is the diversified nature of its business. While Woolwich continues to rely on mortgages and savings for three quarters of its profits, A&L now derives just 30 per cent of its profits from this. The remainder of its revenue

Fitness First

FITNESS FIRST yesterday displayed the sort of agility that not only its customers aspire to. The 50 per cent stake it has acquired in Fitness Company of Germany is the sort of move analysts had been expecting from higher-profile rivals such as Vardon and Holmes Place.

The deal, part-funded by a share placing at 333p, gives the group a platform for expansion throughout continental Europe — at a stage of development similar to that in the UK in 1996 when Fitness First floated. The market in Germany is fragmented and dominated by smaller, generally poor quality clubs, and the company believes its concept will go down well there.

In the UK, meanwhile, it continues to grow rapidly, with three clubs due to open by its October year end to add to the 24 it already has. The market, on fears over

consumer spending, has taken fright at its bullish plans for 100—or even 200—clubs in the UK, although there is reason to believe its "affordable fitness" concept will ride any downturn better than most. Also, its low-cost format ensures returns of around 30 per cent.

Greig Middleton's 1998 earnings forecast of 7.5p per share — up 2p to 351p — on a whopping multiple of 47. But its enhanced growth potential and likely 1999 earnings of 12.6p (ignoring the German deal) put it on a more reasonable 28 times. A healthy opportunity.

Johnson

JOHNSON Service Group, the dry-cleaner and workwear rental company formerly called Johnson Cleaners, managed to take the gloss off a sparkling set of interim results yesterday by raising concerns about the economic slowdown.

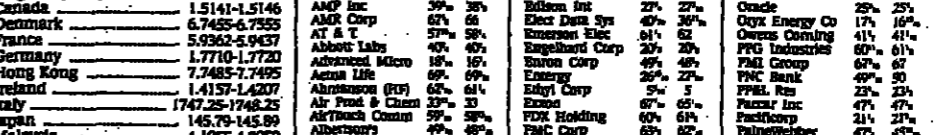
In dry-cleaning Johnson is

closely associated with consumer expenditure and could easily feel pain if things get serious. Its exposure to UK plc, through renting working clothes to manufacturers, is more troubling in this respect, particularly as this is the segment where, with dry-cleaning mature, Johnson is hoping to generate business growth.

While the external signals are not auspicious the company is also expanding. The purchase last month of Ireland's Connacht Group, takes gearing to 49 per cent and the firm has eyes on other acquisitions.

The shares, up 7p to 295p, are trading at little more than ten times earnings per share. The hoped-for dividend also puts the stock on a prospective 5 per cent-plus yield. If the economy was in better shape this would represent considerable value. As it is, the risks undermine the attractions.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE



COMMODITIES

LIFE

COCA	1191-1187
1098-1096	1208-1203
1122-1121	1151-1149
1117-1114	1151-1149
1118-1114	1151-1149
1108-1104	1151-1149

ROBUSTA COFFEE (\$/lb)

100-100	100-100
103-103	103-103
103-103	103-103
103-103	103-103
103-103	103-103

WHITE SUGAR (\$/lb)

254-254	254-254
254-254	254-254
254-254	254-254
254-254	254-254
254-254	254-254

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

100-100	100-100
100-100	100-100
100-100	100-100
100-100	100-100
100-100	100-100

COMMODITIES

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

Crude Oil (\$/barrel FOB)	12.05	-0.05
Brent Physical	12.05	-0.05
Brent 15 day (step)	12.70	0.04
WTI Intermediate (step)	13.85	+0.05
WTI Intermediate (cash)	14.15	0.00
Naphtha	18.64	-0.12

PRODUCTS (\$/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)	14.20	-0.10
Premium Unit	14.60	0.00
Gas Oil	10.1	0.00
35 Fuel Oil	60.0	0.00
Naphtha	18.64	-0.12

LIPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

Aug 98	107.75	108.00
Oct 98	111.75	112.00
Dec 98	115.50	116.00

GAS OIL

Aug 98	107.75	108.00
Oct 98	111.75	112.00
Dec 98	115.50	116.00

BRENT (\$/bbl)

Aug 98	12.05	12.05
Oct 98	12.05	12.05
Dec 98	12.05	12.05

EUROPEAN MONEY MARKET

1 month	7.75%
3 months	7.75%
6 months	7.75%
12 months	7.75%

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD

1 month	1.6250
3 months	1.6250
6 months	1.6250
12 months	1.6250

MARKET LISTINGS

ASDA	1.895	Lloyer TSB	10.021
ASDA	1.895	Lloyer TSB	10.021
ASDA	1.895	Lloyer TSB	10.021
ASDA	1.895	Lloyer TSB	10.021
ASDA	1.895	Lloyer TSB	10.021

كردمان الامل

NEWS

US embassy bombers kill 70

Terrorist attacks against American embassies in Africa yesterday left up to 70 dead and over 1,000 injured in twin blasts in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam.

The scale of the attacks plunged both the Kenyan and Tanzanian cities into chaos, their streets strewn with charred bodies as the emergency services attempted to cope with the massive chaos. Pages 1, 4, 5, 19

Lottery bonus for teachers

THE Government is considering expanding a pioneering national lottery scheme that takes teachers out of the classroom and sends them back to college as part of a crusade to improve religious education in primary schools. Page 1

Degree of doubt

The most prized and least onerous academic qualification at Oxbridge is at risk. Pages 1, 17

Release backed

The father of a boy murdered in the IRA explosion that killed Earl Mountbatten has supported the bomber's release. Page 2

Quick getaway

Lord Brocket finished in jail sentence for fraud in style - leaving prison in a biker's jacket and jeans aboard a gleaming Harley-Davidson motorcycle. Page 3

Law unto himself

A lawyer who could not bear to give his clients bad news has been struck off after issuing false divorce papers in cases he could not resolve. Page 7

Pig surplus

The least predictable side-effect of the Far Eastern economic crisis is a population boom among British pigs. Page 9

Saving Private Fowler

The remarkable story of a British soldier who spent the entire First World War hiding in a French cupboard has been pieced together by a teacher in north France. Private Patrick Fowler emerged in 1918 to meet the advancing British Army. Page 13

Brunel deal

A secret deal between a British model and associates of the Sultan of Brunei has paved the way for a new legal offensive by Shannon Marketic, the American beauty queen whose claims of sexual coercion and depravity have sullied the Sultan's palace for two years. Page 11

Lewinsky red-faced

Monica Lewinsky was acutely embarrassed when describing details of her sexual liaisons with President Clinton to a grand jury but kept her composure. Page 13

Bolan name rocks on

Rolan Bolan, son of the 1970s pop star Marc, is launching his own musical career. Page 14

Waste dumps probe

Ministers have ordered an urgent review of the health risks posed by Britain's 8,000 waste dumps after research showed a greater risk of birth defects near landfill sites. Page 15



The Gorsedd of Bards, ruling body of the National Eisteddfod, gathered at Bridgend yesterday for a ceremony first held in 1792. Page 16

Fringe freaks out

In draughty halls across Edinburgh a motorcycling midget, transsexuals from Bangkok and a contortionist who squeezes into a glass bottle wearing only a namu headgear are limbering up for the Festival Fringe. Page 8

Target America

The greatest victory terrorism could gain would be to reinforce a national weariness about America's engagement. Page 19

Why Lewinsky matters

President Clinton has survived successive scandals by saying little and waiting for the storm to pass. Page 19

Simon Jenkins

What is equally baffling is why homosexuals should want anything to do with this fractious and unwelcoming confession. Why not find a church of their own? Page 18

Ben MacIntyre

There was everything one could have wanted from a classic French meal and yet the experience was uncomfortable. Page 18

Unilever

The Anglo-Dutch giant confessed that the millennium bug is likely to cost it £300 million. Page 23

Markets

The FTSE 100 rose 86.3 to close at 5680.4. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose to 103.9. Page 27

Cricket

England produced a tremendous fight-back, led by Angus Fraser, in the final Test against South Africa. Page 29

Rugby union

Lawrence Dallaglio has stood down as captain of Wasps to concentrate on Test matches with England. Page 31

Football

The new season kicks off with the Charlzy Shield. Page 35-36

2000 alert

The millennium bug may cause havoc for personal investors. Page 56

Good old sport

The Superblower AC, successor to the Cobra. Pages 43-45

the times magazine

Agent provocateur: Hollywood's golden girl re-creates Emma Peel. Page 16

Shanghai surprise: New playground for Western high-rollers. Page 24

Soldiering on: A woman's fight to gain a pardon for her uncle, who was shot for desertion. Page 70

Fringe benefit: Lee and Fleming can't kick the Edinburgh habit. Page 6

Snatching guests: A step-by-step guide to the charms of hill-country driving from Peggy Spence. Page 14

All fired up: Lemn Sissay on his ground-breaking poetry anthology. Page 16

Seven-day listing of radio and 40 TV channels

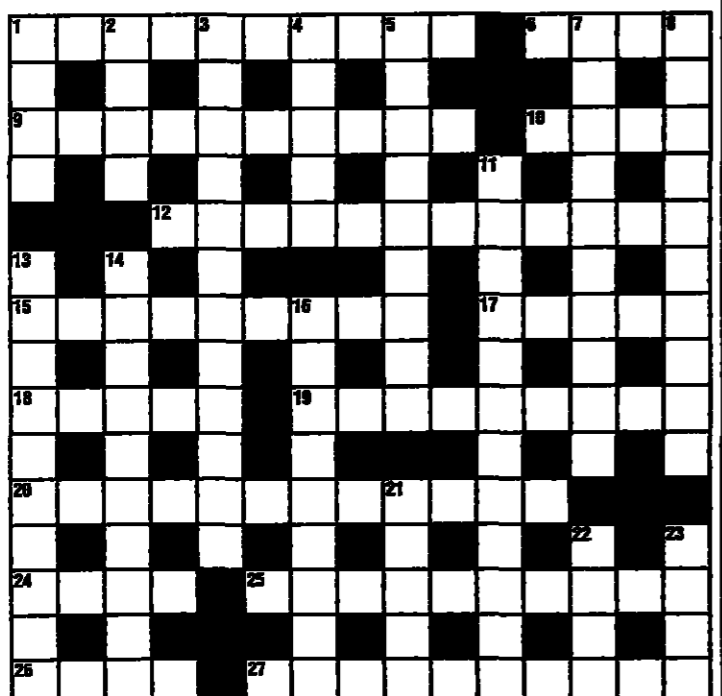
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SUPERFLY - make a kite to terrorize the skies!

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,865

A £20 book token will be awarded to the senders of the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The names of the winners and the solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address



- ACROSS
1 Young women good enough for writer (10).
6 Book that takes a couple of seconds (4).
9 I'm to carry out tests without new lab? Not bloody likely! (10).
10 Foreign woman cut crime (4).
12 Existing expenses (4,2,6).
15 Noble art patron well placed to see canvas (9).
17 Bow that originally had it (5).
18 Reported investigation of European country (5).
19 Work of Praxiteles, terribly atrophied (9).
20 Cave below one of the houses (5,7).
24 Out to lunch in clubs (4).
25 Runs into criminal simpleton getting bird (5,5).
26 Choice of large numbers for the rest of the pupils (4).
27 Light with shade? (6,4).

World City Weather conditions
UK Weather - All regions 0236 444 910
UK Roads - All regions 0236 401 410
USA 0236 401 746
USA and Link Roads 0236 401 747
National Motorway 0236 401 748
Continental Europe 0236 401 910
Channel crossing 0236 401 328
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THE TIMES CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS
Solution to Puzzle No 20859
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UPPER GENERATOR
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C H E R U E M I S T I K
L S I A C A N
A I S I E P A N N A S S U S
S M A R T C A R D E N D U P
P R E X E
P O P M U S I C F A I R I E R
L E A R T H K A T I K
E V O C A T I V E D I N G O
A V O E E S O
T R A S H O N P U R G E L I N
S T A T E R H E A D M O S T

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THE TIMES CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS
Solution to Puzzle No 20864
M I X E D P A S S A G E T
M E O R E O A E
UPPER GENERATOR
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C H E R U E M I S T I K
L S I A C A N
A I S I E P A N N A S S U S
S M A R T C A R D E N D U P
P R E X E
P O P M U S I C F A I R I E R
L E A R T H K A T I K
E V O C A T I V E D I N G O
A V O E E S O
T R A S H O N P U R G E L I N
S T A T E R H E A D M O S T

General: hot and sunny in England and Wales, although southern and western coasts will have cooling winds. Central and northern Scotland will have rain at times, but the weather will become brighter in southern Scotland and Northern Ireland.
London, E, SE & Central S England: early mist, then hot and sunny. Wind SW, light. Max 30C (86F).
Channel Isles, SW England: early mist, then hot and sunny. Wind SW, light. Max 26C (79F).
S & N Wales: early mist, then hot and sunny. Wind SW, light. Max 28C (82F).
NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man: sunny spells. Wind SW, moderate. Max 25C (77F).
Central N & NE England: sunny spells. Wind SW, moderate. Max 26C (79F).
Borders, SW Scotland: mostly dry, bright intervals later. Wind SW, moderate. Max 22 (72F).
Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Inverary: mostly cloudy, some rain, brighter later. Variable wind. Max 20C (68F).
Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll: mostly cloudy, some rain. Wind moderate, variable. Max 21C (70F).
NE & NW Scotland, Orkney: mostly cloudy, some rain. Variable winds. Max 18C (66F).
Shetland: starting cloudy with rain, brighter later. Variable winds. Max 14C (57F).
N Ireland: bright spells. Wind SW, moderate. Max 21C (70F).
Republic of Ireland: dry with bright or sunny spells. Wind SW, light. Max 23C (73F).
Outlook: warm and sunny.

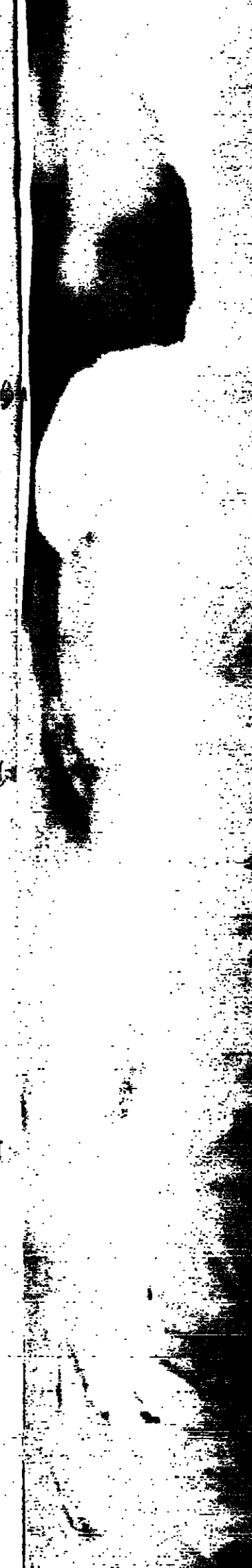
Table with columns for City, Sun, Moon, and other weather indicators. Includes cities like Aberdeen, Glasgow, London, etc.

Table with columns for City, Sun, Moon, and other weather indicators. Includes cities like London, Manchester, Birmingham, etc.

TEMPERATURES AT VARIOUS LOCAL AREAS ON THURSDAY X - NOT AVAILABLE
Map showing temperature contours across the UK.



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TORONTO OR NEW YORK
BA747 to Toronto on 3 October
TORONTO OR NEW YORK
ORIANA & ORIENT-EXPRESS
Concorde to Santiago on 13 October



United front
Tuning into football TV

PAGE 36

Courses for horses
Secrets of the Pony Club

PAGE 41

Palace spokesman
Venables begins new venture

PAGE 37

go

SKATE YOURSELF TO WORK

PAGE 45

WEEKEND MONEY

CAN YOU AFFORD A PRIVATE JET?
PAGE 54

THE TIMES SATURDAY SPORT **12 PAGES**

AUGUST 8 1998

SOUTH AFRICA EDGE AHEAD AT HEADINGLEY



England revived by Fraser's heart

BY ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

HEADINGLEY (second day of five): England, with all second-innings wickets in hand, are 20 runs behind South Africa

IF THIS was indeed the decisive day of the cricketing summer, as well as the most gripping, England will look back upon it either with regret and remorse for the few mad minutes when they dropped three catches in 22 balls, or with undiluted admiration for the big heart and mercurial excellence of Angus Fraser.

In the context of a taut occasion, the fielding philanthropy was an aberration and it invited Hansie Cronje to play an innings of stature and menace. Just when he looked about to take the day, the game and the Cornhill series into untouchable territory, however, Fraser reclaimed much of the lost ground.

Suddenly, Fraser is hounding the South Africans in the same way he did the West Indians earlier this year. Ten wickets at Trent Bridge, where he had feared for his place, were followed by five more yesterday, earned without charity and retaining the winning prospects that England, through limp batting and flawed catching, had tried so hard to sabotage.

Cronje almost made them pay. He only made 57, it occupied almost four hours and there were regular periods when he retreated into strokelessness. It does not sound spectacular, yet it was the centrepiece of a riveting day, earning South Africa a

Scoreboard 33
Michael Henderson 33
County reports 32-33

first-innings lead of 22 that may have disproportionate significance in conditions where batting can only become more hazardous. And England will need no reminding that he should have been out for 20.

Over the weeks, Cronje has been the quiet master of South Africa's destiny. His deeds have attracted little attention yet his figures with the bat — 401 runs now at an average of 80 — have been as impressive as his single-minded captaincy. Mostly, he has batted with élan but, yesterday, he imposed a rigid self-denial in keeping with a game where every run has been begrudged and every fumble of the pitch distrusted.

Cronje's concentration lapse just once and England spent the rest of the day berating themselves for the failure to punish him. When he drove at an outswinger from Dominic Cork and Nasser Hussain split a chance that came at comfortable height and pace, England lost their best opportunity to assume control.

They had just taken the important wicket of Jacques Kallis and, if Hussain had clung on, South Africa would have been 129 for five, still 101 adrift. Instead, in a harrowing sequence that players and management will watch again only for masochism, the error was compounded by two retrieves in successive overs for Jonty Rhodes.

In the fashion that opponents find so maddening, Rhodes had ignored the perils and pressures inhibiting other



Fraser appeals for the vital scalp of Cronje, the South Africa captain, whom he trapped leg-before

ers. He had reached 19 in no time, then pulled Darren Gough at head-height to square-leg, where Mark Ramprakash could only parry it.

That Ramprakash had just taken an immeasurably more difficult catch partly pardoned him, though when Graeme Hick then put down a regulation slip chance, England were in no mood for excuses. Cork, the suffering bowler, was distraught and, as Alec Stewart counselled him busily, the thought occurred that a fluctuating series might have taken its final turn.

Fraser, helped by Gough, ensured the plot remains as thick as ever into the third morning and all that can be said with confidence is that the draw — pre-match favourite with all bookmakers — is now a very remote outsider of three.

England were blessed by enviable bowling conditions. Cloud hung over the ground again but the wind of Thursday had eased to a breeze and the muggy atmosphere encouraged swing. Cork, after a wasteful start, exploited it well in a marathon spell of 16 overs, split by tea, that merited more than his two wickets.

The first of the day, heartily cheered by a packed house, predictably fell to Fraser, though umpire Javed Akhtar must be put down for an assist. The ball may have pitched outside leg stump and certainly seemed to be bouncing too high, but Akhtar dispatched Gary Kirsten without ceremony.

Kirsten's summer now has an extraordinary look. He made 210 at Old Trafford but, in nine more international innings, Test and one-day, his aggregate is a puny 69. Cast alongside the hapless Gerry Liebenberg, for whom yesterday's 21 was the highest score of a dismal series, it has given South Africa's top order an ongoing vulnerability.

Fraser accounted for Liebenberg in his eighth over, as he jabbed a catch to second slip, but the admirable new-ball pair gave way to bowling of contrasting latitude from Cork and Flintoff. Stewart turned only briefly to Salisbury, and arguably should have used him more, but required two tidy spells from

spell. Daryll Cullinan, uneasy at the constrictions of the pitch, flayed outside off stump and edged to Stewart.

Cork was settled by his first wicket, no matter that it came from a long hop that Kallis identified as a donation. His pull, not quite balanced, looked like eluding Ramprakash at mid-wicket but a spectacular plunge, right hand outstretched, contrived one of the catches of the year.

England would prefer a veil to be drawn over the subsequent sequence, though at least in the case of Rhodes it was not punitively expensive. Having made 32 of a stand worth 43, he offered a darting drive at Gough and Stewart took a routine catch.

McMillan, plainly out of touch, was crowded by close fielders and played a number of air shots at a fired-up Cork before chipping a simple catch to mid-on. Pollock was immediately struck on the forearm by a good-length ball from Flintoff, proof of the capabilities of this pitch, but he banished self-doubt to share the highest stand of the innings with his captain.

The new ball stemmed the tide, not a moment too soon. Cronje, leg-before only half-forward, fell to Fraser as he took three for two in 11 balls. Gough finished the job in time to allow one palpating over of the second innings, safely survived to set up a Saturday to savour.

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Gough celebrates taking the wicket of Cullinan, caught behind by Stewart in the fifth Test at Headingley yesterday

SWIMMING

Smith vows to fight suspension in courts

By CRAIG LORD

CONSPIRACY theories, bureaucratic bungles and bad laboratory practices are among a catalogue of complaints that Michelle Smith, the triple Olympic champion from Ireland, will take with her to courts both sporting and civil in her fight against a four-year suspension for tampering with a drug-test urine sample.

Criticising everyone from Fina, the international governing body that has suspended her, to the drug-testers, laboratory staff and the media, Smith, 28, yesterday said that she intended to seek significant damages against Fina for "what can only be described as a blatant and mischievous attempt to ruin my swimming career and my international standing".

When asked why swimming authorities might pursue such a vendetta, Smith gestured to Erik de Bruin, beside her. "I'm married to this man. Some people think that's motive enough," she said. De Bruin, a former discus-thrower from Holland, was suspended for a positive drug test in 1993.

At the Dublin offices of Peter Lennon, her solicitor, Smith, who is said by Fina to have placed alcohol in a urine sample, complained that the testers had failed to express their concerns to her about the strong smell of alcohol coming from her urine.

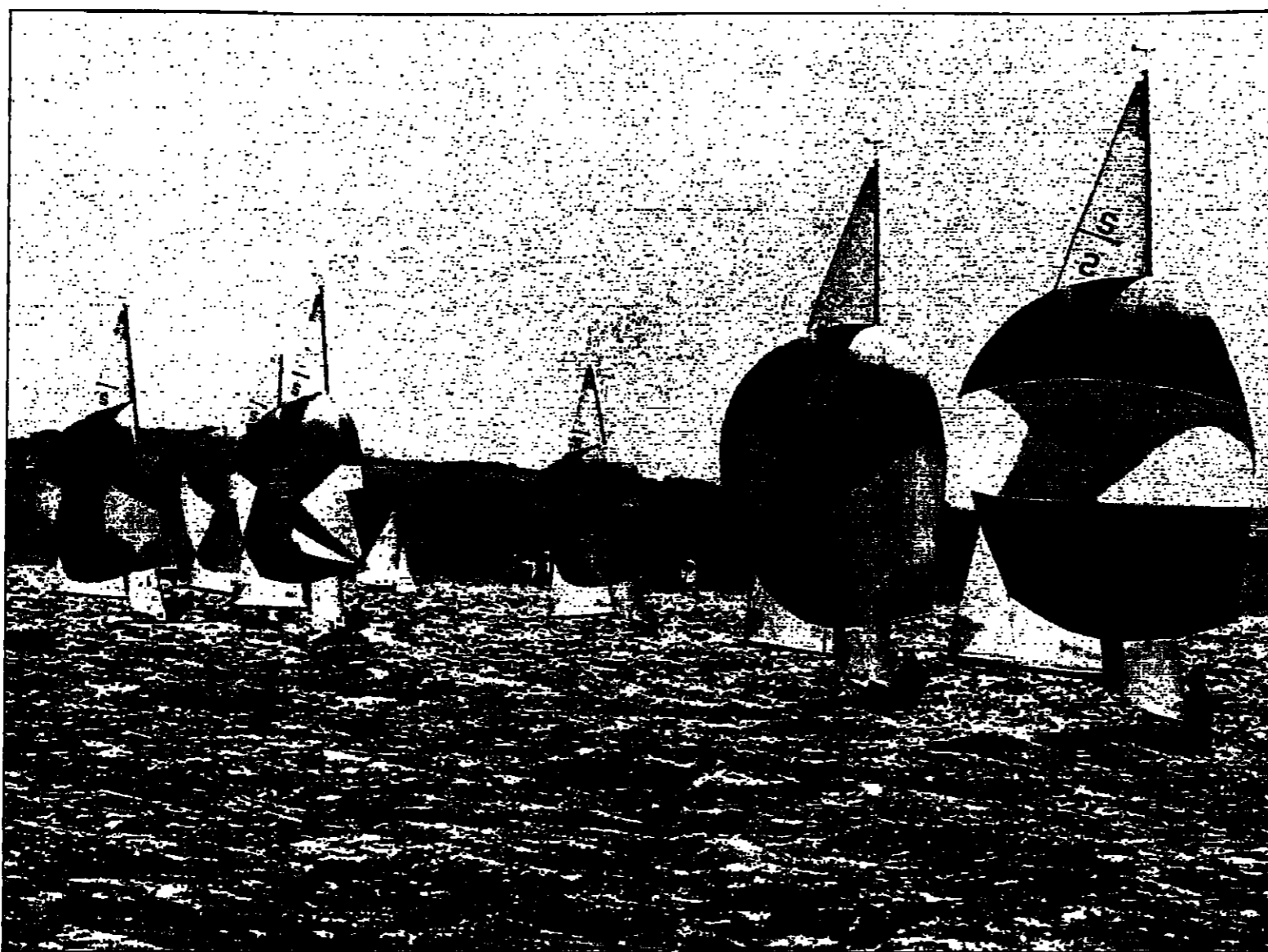
Smith claimed that the type of seal used on the testing jar that contained her specimen was flawed. There was no explanation, however, as to how the same seal, with its coded numbers, could be replaced without anyone noticing that something was amiss.

Smith said the absence of a specific banned substance in her sample meant that there was no motive for her to have put the whiskey in the testing jar. She and Lennon said that the burden of proof rested with Fina, which had failed to prove its case.

Smith will take her fight to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland. If that fails, Lennon indicated that the next stop would be the European Court of Human Rights.

"I am fighting for my reputation and for my right to go to Sydney [for the 2000 Olympic Games]," Smith said yesterday. "I want to be up on the winner's blocks again."

National champion triumphs again after poor start



Making waves: the fleet of National Swallows sail under spinnaker towards the marker on the Solent near Cowes yesterday

Smith breezes home in style

By EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT

ROB SMITH'S fine form in the international Melges 24 continued yesterday, when he won his fourth race in *Henri Lloyd Rapid Breathing* at a hot but breezy Skandia Life Cowes Week to wrap up a convincing series win with one race still to come today.

On a day when all racing was postponed for three hours before a decent sea breeze filled in from the southwest, Smith made one of his worst starts as the Melges headed upwind towards Gurnard with what has become a steadily stronger ebb tide as the week has progressed.

So cautious was he, in fact, that Smith was 150 yards behind the early leader as he left the Royal Yacht Squadron in last place, with 24 other boats to catch. It is a measure of Smith's ability and that of his crew — Paul Strzelecki, Freddie Blenke and Ben Nicholls — that he went on to win the race.

By the first upwind mark he had overtaken 16 boats and by the second mark, after a reach across to the mainland shore, Smith was sixth when the fleet was being led by Willie McNeill, in *Scorn*. A gybe to Royal Southern and Marcus Dragons, Smith had only Dave Hall, the former national champion, in *Hyde Between the Sheets*, in his sights. "We just pulled away from him," Smith said. "Awesome behaviour and very Mancunian."

It was Smith's second big victory of the year after his earlier win in the national championships and he now goes into the class world championships at Torquay next month, with his boat speed finely tuned and his confidence high. "There will

be a lot of top names there. I think we stand as good a chance as any of the European boats, though we are not sure about the pace of the Americans."

A former top Cadet sailor with form at world or national championship level in GPI4s, Fireballs, Enterprise and Dragons, Smith has had a competitive week with the likes of Hall, Mike Lennon and Roman Christian, the Frenchman, to pit his wits against. "The first two days were incredibly tough with a first race that lasted six hours, which is a long time in a sportsboat. In the breeze on Monday, there were only three in it, so the points spread out a bit from there," he said.

The battle for second place overall today looks to be

between Lennon, in *Fundamental*, and Christian, in *Ale*. The Melges fleet is not of comparable quality to last year but it leads the wacky games league at Cowes this year, with Malcolm Chalmers sailing *Viagra* and Marcus Gabriel making an intermittent appearance in *Eat My Shorts*.

In Class I, Richard Loftus's Swan 65, *Desperado* of Cowes, which is named *Accurist* for the week, won her second race of the regatta to lift the Rocking Chair Trophy, with Harold Cudmore at the wheel of *Russe Noir* 98 in second and Kit Hobday's *Independent Bear Mark II* third. The *Bear* was lying second overall behind Tony de Mulder's *Victoric* 4, which still holds the initiative after finishing fifth yesterday.

In the X One Design fleet, Alastair Ashford, in *Relaxation*, secured victory with a race to spare after finishing fourth for the second time yesterday. It has been a fine and consistent performance by Ashford, who leaves Peter Baines, in *Road Coral*, and Stuart Jardine, who won yesterday's *Lone Star*, to fight it out for second place today.

In the Solent Sunbeams, Jonathan Money, in *Polly*, completed his third win in a row and his fourth of the regatta to be leading going into the last race with class captain Roger Wickens, in *Danny*, who was third yesterday, in second position overall. There were further problems in Classes 3 and 4, both of which did not get a result after failing to complete their course within the time limit.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Hingis fails to impress on way to semi-finals

TENNIS: Martina Hingis, the champion and No 1 seed, became the first player to reach the semi-finals of the Toshiba Classic in Carlsbad, California, when she beat Joannette Kruger, of South Africa, 6-1, 6-3. Hingis, the world No 1, was guilty of some careless play, but said: "Once you win the first set 6-1, you can lose concentration and just try to do a show and make some stupid shots that don't work out as well as Hingis' main rivals for the title, Lindsay Davenport, the No 2 seed, and Venus Williams, seeded No 3, both came through second-round matches to book their places in the quarter-finals. Davenport rallied from 4-2 down in the second set to overcome Lisa Raymond, a fellow American, 6-1, 6-4, and in another all-American contest, Williams defeated Chanda Rubin 6-3, 6-2. The route to the last eight proved more hazardous for Nathalie Tauziat, the Wimbledon finalist. She struggled to defeat Amy Frazier, an American qualifier, 6-2, 3-6, 6-1.

Tim Henman, the Great Britain No 2, was left frustrated as his third-round match with Alberto Costa, of Spain, in the du Maurier Open in Toronto was washed out.

Christmas surges to title

BOWLS: Maureen Christmas, who partnered her daughter, Jenny Tunbridge, to the national pairs title in 1990, defeated Cindy Edmondson, of Cumbria, 15-11, in the final of the EWBA two-wood singles championship at Royal Leamington Spa yesterday (David Rhys Jones writes). A late surge made all the difference as Christmas secured the last five shots without reply. The pairs final today is between Maureen Monkton and Edna Bessell, of Yeovil, and Helen Tooby and Pat Launders, of Shepherds Bush Cricket Club. Yeovil beat two internationals from Oxford, Audrey Mairwaring and Irene Molyneux, 21-10, in the semi-finals, while the Londoners edged home, 21-20, against Wendy Anderson and Doris Woodley, of Wiltshire.

Matthew marches on

SQUASH: Nick Matthew, from Sheffield, forced his way into what should prove the easier of the two semi-finals in the Merrill Lynch junior men's championships at Princeton, New Jersey, when he defeated Lee Jemmett, of Essex, a colleague in the England team, 9-4, 9-4, 7-9, 9-4 in the quarter-finals (Colin McQuillan writes). Matthew, 18, will now meet Wael Hattam El Hendy, of Egypt. Although Adrian Grant, of Kent, took a 3-0 lead in the third game against Muhammad Hussain, the third seed, he eventually succumbed to the Egyptian's aggressive game. Hussain won 9-4, 1-9, 9-3, 9-3 to qualify for a semi-final against the top seed, Ong Beng Hee, of Malaysia.

England's clean sweep

HOCKEY: England wound up their international preparations for the Commonwealth Games in style when they defeated Canada 3-1 to claim a clean sweep of the three-match series at Milton Keynes yesterday (Cathy Harris writes). Tina Cullen set the stage for victory in the twentieth minute when she stole the ball on the end and beat two defenders before breaking into the goal and setting up Jane Smith for the opening goal. Sue Armstrong equalised six minutes later but Sarah Blanks restored England's lead with a deflected penalty corner goal in the 57th minute and Cullen sealed victory seven minutes from time when she glanced in another corner.

First prize shared

CHESS: The grandmasters Nigel Short and Matthew Sadler, the defending co-champion, shared the first prize in the British championship at Torquay yesterday. Short's hopes of an outright victory were dashed when he lost in the final round to Tony Miles, who himself finished in third place. Short and Sadler will now contest a brief match today to determine the final leading placings in the tournament.

Keene on Chess, Weekend, page 35

RUGBY LEAGUE: COACH DETERMINED TO LIFT CHAMPIONS OUT OF SLUMP

Elliott issues Bulls' rallying cry

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

THE familiar apology from Bradford Bulls failed to materialise this week. Rather than false promises by the JB Super League champions to put their crumbling house in order, the Bulls have quietly gone about their preparation for the visit by Hull Sharks tomorrow.

Odsal reverberated to jeers last Sunday after the defeat by Sheffield Eagles. The excuses had dried up and followers of the best-supported club vented their anger over a seventh reverse.

Matthew Elliott, the Bulls' Australian coach, cut a forlorn figure on the surrounding speedway track. He said he was devastated by deserving of the flak. Elliott wants a two-year extension to his contract at Odsal, but rumours about his future have, inevitably, flared up as his team struggle to remain in play-off contention.

"What this last week has done for me is sharply put in focus that I really want to be coach of this club," Elliott said. "When you are winning 20 games on the trot it's easy to be a coach, but when things are not going as well as you'd like, it's time to make stock."

"On a personal level, I've had an inspirational last week, having experienced some of the things that have occurred. In this game, these tough times are inevitable. What I know more than ever is that the whole Bulls family has to stick together. We must use that spirit and make it work for us."

Elliott, clearly, has had a better week than some of his players. There are fitness doubts about Graeme Bradley, Stuart Spruce, Paul Deacon and Brian McDermott, to compound an injury crisis that has been at the heart of Bradford's decline this season.

Bernard Dwyer is the latest to succumb to the need to recuperate from an injury that has bothered him for weeks. The backbone of last season's all-conquering team, Warren Jowitt, Paul Anderson, Sonny Nickle and Danny Peacock, were consigned to the treatment table early, and, in Anderson's case, before the season began.

Nonetheless, injuries are only partly to blame. Opponents this season have adapted to the powerful down-the-middle style that still characterises the Bulls' play. Bradford's one outstanding win, at Leeds Rhinos, looked

the best tonic going into the mid-season break last month, but the subsequent defeats by London Broncos in Edinburgh and Sheffield indicated a critical loss of momentum.

Hull, one of five clubs below the leading five for whom the play-offs remain a possibility, are precisely the sort of opponents Bradford have been losing to in recent weeks. With four wins in their previous five outings, the Sharks are fully capable of reversing their earlier 26-24 league defeat.

Halifax Blue Sox, tucked in behind Wigan Warriors and Leeds at the top, venture to Castleford Tigers, who dealt a setback to Leeds in an impressive display six days ago.

Leeds badly need to beat Salford Reds, for whom Shane Kenward, a scrum half, makes his debut 48 hours after arriving from Australia.

St Helens, like Bradford struggling to hold on to their play-off spot, are unchanged for the visit to Warrington Wolves.

□ The Rugby Football League (RFL) insists that the autumn series between Great Britain and New Zealand will proceed, despite a call by Frank Endacott, the Kiwis coach, for the New Zealand Rugby League to consider calling off the three matches. Endacott is angry that Super League clubs are set to prevent Henry Paul (Wigan), Robbie Paul (Bradford) and Richie Blackmore (Leeds) from playing for New Zealand in two internationals against Australia during the British play-offs.

The move would contravene international regulations, but representatives from all the playing nations hope to reach a solution at a meeting in Sydney in two weeks. "We sympathise with our own clubs. However, we are also aware of international rules," David Callaghan, the RFL deputy chief executive, said.



Elliott: under pressure

Jets and Saints spread the word

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

THE sport has poured across its northern battlements to all points of the compass. Today, in the Middle England venue of Cheltenham, the most easterly and southerly clubs in the country meet in the grand final of the new Rugby League Conference.

South Norfolk Saints and Crawley Jets have emerged from a 14-team competition that has reached peaks of England untouched by the 13-man code, until now. A 1,000-strong crowd is expected at the Prince of Wales stadium for a match with wider significance.

Lionel Hurst, a Cheltenham lawyer and Conference chairman, predicts that in five years rugby league will have a true national identity. "Imagine Featherstone Rovers v Oxford Cavaliers, Wakefield Trinity v Crawley, Hull Kingston Rovers

v Worcester Saints, and so on. If that's not mouthwatering, I don't know what is," he said.

"Every sizeable town in England will have a quality rugby league club within five years," he said. "That's the aim, and this is what will happen, as this game continues on its unstoppable march to becoming a national sport."

Bristol, Crewe and Stafford are among the applicants for next season. Summer holds the key. "It dovetails beautifully with rugby union," Hurst said. "The Bath-Wigan games persuaded people that we have a magnificent sport with magnificent athletes."

He likened the Conference to a national gateway. Most of the 700

registered players are newcomers or from a union background, which could explain the confusion when South Norfolk briefly fielded 14 players during their semi-final defeat of Chester Wolves.

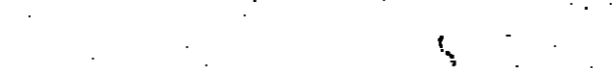
Cross-code operation has been behind the success of the Crawley venture, among others. Rod Hammond, their key player at centre, is different to the several airport workers who make up the Jets: the travelling student landed at Gatwick from Brisbane three months ago and refused to leave before the final.

When Mick Byrne chose today to get married, he failed to envisage South Norfolk's progress. A team not even up and running before April will surprise themselves even more should they win. Whatever the outcome, rugby league will be the overall winner.

FOR THE RECORD

Table with multiple columns containing sports results under categories: AUSTRALIAN RULES, BASEBALL, BASKETBALL, BOWLS, FOOTBALL, GOLF, HOCKEY, RUGBY LEAGUE, SAILING, SPEEDWAY, SQUASH, TENNIS, and CRICKET. Each entry includes team names, scores, and brief descriptions of the matches.

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Truly great means never having to say you are legendary

For John Osborne, the most appalling word of the modern age was "life-style". He reckoned, and he had a good point, that no person of genuine style would ever use such a sloppy word. Kingsley Amis, another man who usually hit the nail on the head, offered his own particular hate "workshop". Whatever really is the most unpleasant word, and feel free to supply your own, there are plenty to choose from.

MICHAEL HENDERSON



body, or something, is deemed legendary, it is usually time to head for the hills.

"Ethnic" is pretty bad. "community" badder. An ethnic community workshop hits the jackpot as surely as three plums on a fruit machine. More recently, a different stream of guff has entered the language: icon, guru, even — goodness gracious! — zeitgeist. Or how about "access" as a verb? Then there is the new sports vocabulary, imported from the United States, that favours religious imagery.

In any debate about words, their meaning, their use and their abuse, there is one shocker that stands out, and this week the Football League employed it to flag its latest enterprise: legendary. To celebrate the centenary of the world's most famous football league a panel of scribes has selected 100 famous players who are not good, or very good, or famous, or even great, but — roll of drums, please — "legendary".

What a revolting word it is, the sort that ad-men use to make their grubby parish sound grand. It's the kind of bloated claim that belongs in Atlantic City and Las Vegas, and other lands of make-believe. If people absolutely have to use it, then they should apply it only to the five-star popular entertainers: Astaire, Bogart, Garland, Sinatra. It's hard to see far beyond that list. But it is better not to use it at all.

Wembley, for example, and a pretty big example, likes to advertise itself as the Venue of Legends. Is it not enough to be recognised as the most famous sports stadium in the world? The fact that other people talk themselves up in such an inflated manner does not mean that the English should do that. Sticking out our chests and bragging go against the national grain.

That doesn't mean we have nothing to shout about. A close look at the Top 100, as it should be called, reveals a snazzy snapshot of English football. Has any other country housed such a stable of gifted players? England may have won the World Cup only once but the Football League is entitled to call itself the workshop (whoops! that word again) of the world where the game is concerned.

Most of the choices are sound, if the selection was based on ability, and the contribution those men made to the game over a career. One could say, perhaps, that Franny Lee should have been in, ahead of Malcolm MacDonald, and that Colin Todd was a finer defender than Paul McGrath, and make a small claim on behalf of John Robertson, a magnificent winger, who tends to get forgotten

these days. That's all healthy argument. They were all wonderful players, and opinions on players, even the best ones, differ.

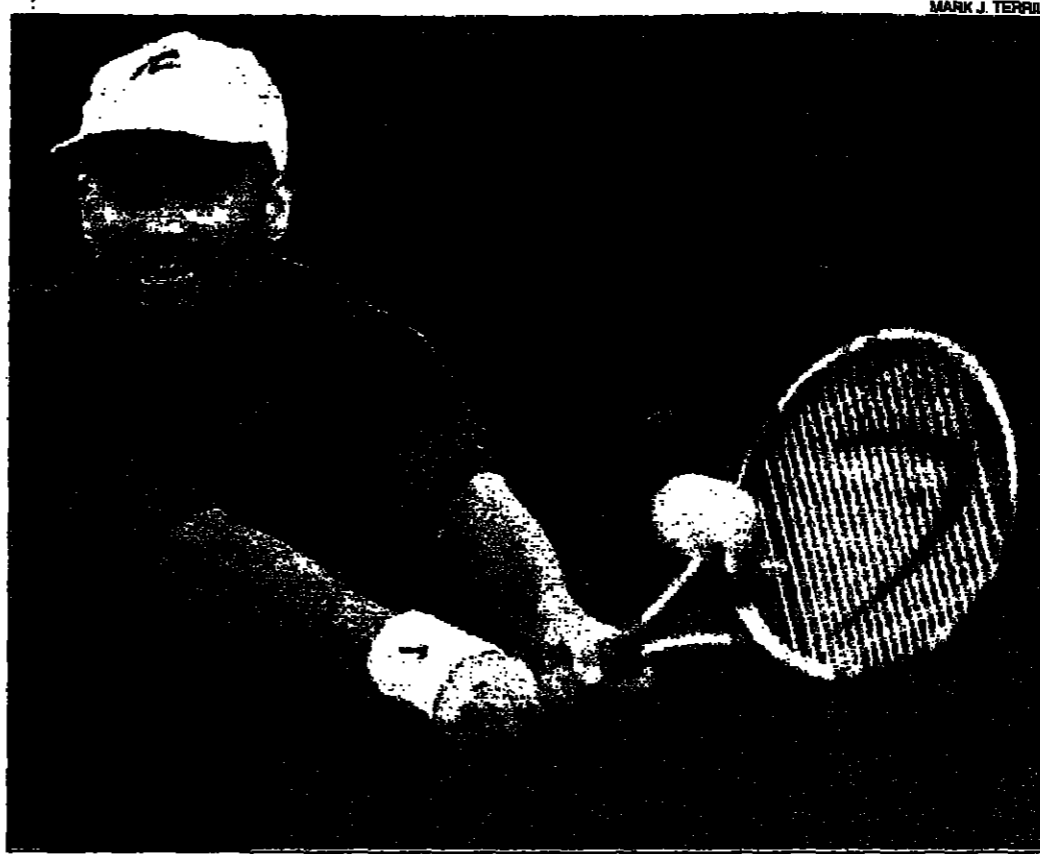
When it comes to deliberation on modern players, there are three serious errors. Ryan Giggs, talented lad that he is, is not worthy of comparison — not yet — with the great players who preceded him. Dennis Bergkamp has not been with Arsenal long enough to be ranked alongside the greats (yes, of course I know that Arsenal won the Double). These players, remember, are being judged on their performance over many years. And, of course, the wretched blubbing child, whose antics are too disgusting for him to be worth a mention, is neither good enough, nor has he spent long enough actually playing in this country, to justify his inclusion.

One good year at Tottenham Hotspur is not sufficient to mark him down as one of the all-time greats of English football. Alas, all the subsequent events that gave him a spurious kind of fame have persuaded the panel to mark him down as a colourful character, a man "of his time", and that sort of rubbish. The impulse should have been resisted. He has been a disgrace, the kind of player who brings a great game into disrepute, and spits in the face of those who came before.

It's always nice when these legends refuse to see themselves in such terms. There was that marvellous story about "the Preston Plumber", the greatest English player who ever kicked a ball if those who played with him are to be believed, and Lofthouse, England's finest centre forward, who went to play a benefit match in Grimsby, where they were paid in the local currency, fish.

"I got cod and chips," Lofthouse said, "and Tommy got a haddock, which was only fair, because he was the better player!" Those players owed everything they had to the game and gave everything in return. But, please, don't call them legends. They deserve better, and so do we.

□ Danny Baker returns next week



Action speaks louder than words for Agassi in his Mercedes-Benz Cup triumph in Los Angeles

Bewildering phrases have become the talk of sport

Andre Agassi was talking funny this week, or possibly he has contracted a rare strain of tongue disease. After beating Tim Henman in the final of the Mercedes-Benz Cup in Los Angeles, he was quoted as saying: "I am having a blast and being on top is not like it sucks". Translate, as the examiners used to demand in the old O level Latin papers.

Now we all know that American English is not the sort we use (don't ask for 20 flags and an early morning knock-up if you're staying in Greenwich Village). But this is a startling example of speech. Anybody who can convey the meaning of what Agassi said will have my undying gratitude. Was he happy or sad? Serious or frivolous? Sober or drunk? Was he, in fact, speaking English at all?

Well, yes, he was. He was speaking the English used by sportsmen the world over, who adopt their own lingo to suit the occasion. The Open University could run a year-long course on the idiomatics of football-speak, using one text alone: the sharp wit and rapid

repartee of Ron Atkinson. Foreigners who sign up for the full course would in no time be sitting in the postcard seats, aiming for the back stick, and being well pleased to be at the races early doors. Brian, because you wouldn't want two of those on a Sunday. Just as Indians are said to mimic Geoffrey Boycott, without fully understanding what he says, whole tribes of Japanese could pass what little time of day they have left over from taking photographs by pretending to be Big Ron.

Football is not the only game with a language of its own. Bill McLaren relied on 101 types of discretion to gloss over thuggery on the rugby pitch, and Eddie Waring became a music-hall turn, much to the disdain of rugby league followers, many of whom didn't care for him one little bit. Apparently, in Los Angeles after the Second World War, he used to knock about with the likes of James Cagney. What a double act they would have made.

The northern code also gave us Maurice Lindsay, who, before

he became the managing director of Super League Europe, was the chairman of Wigan in their all-conquering days. Invited to comment on Leeds, their rivals in a cup-tie, he replied: "I have the highest regard for the Headingley outfit." "Outfit Who on earth talks like that in real life?" It was a classic case of a sports personality not actually thinking, but borrowing his vocabulary from the papers he reads, and papers, as everybody knows, have a language of their own, where people are forever bidding, storming, vowing, blasting, or simply poised to pounce.

For sheer magnificence the agency report filed from a Midlands office 20 or so years ago, when Stoke City were a power in the land, takes some whacking. "Teak-tough, tiger-tackling Mike Bernard, Stoke City's Mr Consistency, wined his way through the pain barrier yesterday and stoutly declared: 'Wild horses couldn't keep me out of this one.' " No, they jolly well could not.

So, keep trying, Mr Agassi. You have some way to go.

Perfection is not all it's cracked up to be

Some clever chap said this week that he could perfect a mechanism whereby umpires could give batsmen out leg-before with absolutely no errors. It's an electronic gizmo, and it's pretty faultless, according to milledio. Should the ICC bless his idea, or throw it away? Chuck it, I think.

The idea of perfection in decision-making is a non-starter. Perfection is not attainable, and it is not particularly desirable. Sport is about human endeavour, and human endeavour means human frailty. Why else play games, or watch them?

Yet again this week we had the spectacle of sportsmen guilty of sharp practice. Andrew Flintoff got a shocker at Headingley, given out caught at short leg off the pad, and television replays showed that Mark Ramprakash was picked up off the floor by Mark Boucher, the South Africa wicketkeeper. It is not the first time this summer that young Boucher has claimed a wicket that he appears not to have earned.

Flintoff, playing his second Test match, and Ramprakash, who has been known to take a dim view of his dismissals, were entitled to feel aggrieved, but they should not mope. Over the course of a series, and over the course of a career, these things even themselves out. They may not feel so philosophical right now, but that is the only proper way to look at these things. Otherwise they would spend all day every day in a towering rage.

There are bad decisions in cricket. Rugby players score tries from forward passes. Footballers score goals that are offside. It's all part of life's rich pageant and may it always be so. If sportsmen demand perfection, or "consistency" as they put it, then we shall demand the same quality from them. As they cannot provide it, we shall have to do away with them altogether, and use computer-driven robots instead to replicate their functions. That way we can do away with the human element, and watch matches where nobody makes any mistakes, ever.

Then we could have an emotional Switzerland, where pretty maids in Alpine frocks deliver the milk every morning, there is no litter in the streets, and there is plenty of chocolate in the fridge for that rainy day. It is a world without risk, reward or fulfillment, and everybody is jolly happy. Or not.

GOLF: SCOT WHO DISMISSED HER HUSBAND AS CADDIE SHARES LEAD IN EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

No heartache for Matthew after divorce

By JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT

THE glowering clouds that discharged a melancholy drizzle on to the Perthshire Hills yesterday mirrored the anxiety that hung over some of the players in the second round of the McDonald's WPGA Championship of Europe at Gleneagles, those desperate to win a place in the Europe team for next month's Solheim Cup match.

Take as an example Catriona Matthew, the 28-year-old who grew up playing in the winds of North Berwick and now lives in the United States for most of the year. Matthew, a past winner of the Australian Open, faces twin pressures. She is seeking an improvement in form to leap up the Solheim Cup standings from her present position of twentieth; and she is also leading Scotland's challenge in this event and thus has a chance of becoming the first female Scottish professional to win a tournament on home

after her first round. Kathryn Marshall, a member of the 1996 team, who is 21st in the standings, did her cause no harm with a 69, one of very few rounds not to contain a bogey, and qualified comfortably for the last two days.

Matthew, who has never been prone to exaggeration, said: "I am playing well enough to win. It is a matter of keeping it going and holing a few putts," before adding cautiously: "We'll wait until Sunday and then see how I am doing before I think seriously about winning."

You could hardly find a person less like Matthew than Alfredsson, who comes from Scandinavia, is far from the icy calm person her nationality suggests she should be.

Her life is lived at pace and in glorious technicolour. She rarely stops talking and is an exception to most rules. Matthew may have fired her husband as her caddie, but Alfredsson is using Leo Cuellar, her long-time partner whom she declines to marry, after sacking her regular caddie midway through a recent tournament.

Alfredsson leads the points table for the match against the US in six weeks by a fraction of a point from Irish Johnson and is a certainty for the match at Muirfield Village, Columbus, Ohio. Her 68 equalled the day's best score and, certainly her play on the homeward nine, which she covered in only 31 strokes, was outstanding.



Laura Davies chips to the 17th green in the rain at Gleneagles where her round of 69 left her one shot off the lead

Horton becomes senior partner

By MEL WEBB

GLANCE down the leaderboard at a tournament on the European Seniors Tour and it can almost be assured that before the eyes have travelled far down the list, they will alight on the name of a man who, despite his lack of physical stature, bestrides the tour like a colossus. Tommy Horton is the dominant force in senior professional golf on this side of the Atlantic and it was not in the least surprising to find him making the pace in the second round of the Senior British Open yesterday.

Horton, a spry 57, has won more than £550,000 in seniors golf since he passed his half-century. The past seven years have brought him riches far beyond what he could have hoped for himself when he was a successful player on the regular European Tour in his salad days of the 60s and 70s.

Senior golf in Europe is still barely more than embryonic and it remains difficult for a man to make a good living playing here. Give it a few years and it might be capable of challenging the primacy of the lucrative US Tour; in the meantime, Horton is doing very nicely, thank you. Show him a golf tourna-

ment and the look that crosses his face is that of the born winner. Horton, who shared the lead with Terry Gale of Australia, on 140, four under par, is a quietly dogged character who lives for the challenge of competition. The second round at the majestic Royal Portrush links was

played in the sort of steady, penetrating drizzle that the Irish could patent as their own and put in bottles, but so absorbed was he in his task that in all probability he barely noticed.

As Horton rounds go, this was a classic of its kind — penetrating woods and long irons hit under the wind,

accurate mid-irons and a sorcerer's touch with the wee clubs. All these things are second nature to him; the putting touch that he found is a less frequent visitor to his game.

He had one bogey and one birdie going to the turn and played the first four holes of the inward half in par. Not boring, but not coruscating either. The glittery stuff he left for the last five holes, four of which he birdied.

The undoubted highlight was the first of those birdies, at the wonderful but forbidding par-three 14th. It is appropriately dubbed Calamity, for nothing less than that is the fate of so many who play it. Depending on the direction of the wind, it can be anything from a seven-iron to a Sunday-best driver. Horton made it look easy with a four-wood and a 15-foot putt that fell in at the last gasp.

He goes into today as one of five men under par — the others are Brian Huggett, Eddie Pollard and the menacing Brian Barnes. All can easily be seen as potential winners; first, though, they have to get past the small, neat figure in the white pork pie hat ahead of them.

RUGBY UNION

English clubs have five days to reconsider

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

ENGLISH clubs have another five days to consider reversing their decision taken last January not to enter the European Rugby Cup. Though all the signs are that they will not, there have been some startling policy reversals in recent weeks and, if they listened to their coaches and players, there could yet be another one.

The longer timescale emerged from the board meeting of ERC Limited in Dublin yesterday, since the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) cannot confirm its entrants until next Wednesday. Their dispute with Cardiff and, to a lesser extent, Swansea — the Welsh League champions — must be resolved by then, otherwise Llanelly and Neath would become eligible to play in Europe, alongside Pontypridd and Ebbw Vale.

Significantly, however, the ERC board will establish a committee to look at future European tournaments. The French board members pressed for a structural review, knowing that their members will remain unhappy until the English are restored to competition and bring both a higher standard of play and greater commercial prospects to the table. Each of the Six Nations — the four home unions — France and Italy — will have one representative on the committee.

The decision of Toulouse and Begles-Bordeaux to participate this season (which, for European fixtures, will begin on September 19), together with Stade Français, Perpignan and Colonniers, has left the proposed alternative tournament for which the English clubs have worked a non-starter. Cardiff have run themselves up so many blind alleys that they stand in danger of competing neither in Europe, nor Wales, nor with their English allies.

mount a defence. "We want to build on the success of the European championship we won last season," Tony Swift, the chief executive, said. "We would love to be competing in Europe again but only in a properly-structured competition which rewards us properly for the efforts we put in."

Bath made as little as £60,000 from their European campaign but their coaching staff and players revelled in the new challenges they faced. Like others, however, they have been forced to draw in their horns and have shed 13 of last season's squad, including the Argentina international, Federico Mendez — who has been linked with North-



Dailaglio: standing down

ampton — and Germain Llanes. They hope to confirm next week that they will be adding Jon Preston, the goalkicking New Zealand half back, to the squad to be captained by Richard Webster, the Wales flanker.

Wasps will be led by Mark Weedon, the New Zealander from Canterbury, after agreeing that Lawrence Dailaglio should stand down. Dailaglio, England's captain last season and likely to be confirmed in office up to next year's World Cup, took up the club captaincy in 1995 but the dual demands are clearly not in his individual interests nor those of Wasps.

CRICKET

Lancashire rewarded for turning to spin

BY RICHARD HOBSON

OLD TRAFFORD (third day of four): Lancashire (23pts) beat Gloucestershire (3) by an innings and 35 runs

IF Old Trafford were a finishing school for young spin bowlers, the inspectors would have studied recent results and closed it down.

For Chris Schofield, however, all is not lost. While history counts against him there are other factors in his favour.



Schofield: level-headed

field for England under-19 duty. He has made quite an impact in his two first-class matches.

Match figures of eight for 116 showed that he can cope with the pressure of expectation. Conditions were not quite perfect for his leg spin — the pitch was a little slow — but he is unlikely to encounter many surfaces as favourable.

He ripped his leg breaks at a good speed and already has a googly. "I would like to give him every opportunity to develop," Whatmore said. "He has possibilities and the indications are that he is a level-headed lad."

John Bracewell, the Gloucestershire coach, knows

the lack of a second spinner is a prime reason why his team may fall short by the end of the season, even allowing for their two games in hand on Surrey, the leaders.

Well, up to a point. In allowing Lancashire to reach 386 in the first-innings — at least 100 too many — Gloucestershire lost any chance they might have had to reverse the disadvantage of Mark Alleyne calling wrongly on Wednesday morning.

It became a case of when rather than whether Lancashire would triumph yesterday. The margin of victory — by an innings and 35 runs — would have been even more emphatic but for an entertaining last-wicket stand of 83 in nine overs between Ball and Lewis, the highest partnership of the match.

Gloucestershire had resumed on 11 for two, still 217 runs from making Lancashire bat again.

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Nash, who scored 23 in Middlesex's first innings, cuts Giles square at Lord's yesterday. Photograph: Winston Bynorth

Munton issues strong reminder

BY PAT GIBSON

LORD'S (third day of four): Middlesex with eight second-innings wickets in hand, need 12 runs to avoid an innings defeat against Warwickshire

FIRST Brian Lara. Now Tim Munton. The two men who did most to take the Britannic Assurance county championship to Edgbaston in 1994 have given Warwickshire a glimpse of what might have been this season.

Everyone remembers Lara's contribution in 1994, more than 2,000 runs and nine centuries. They forget that after he had given Warwickshire time to bowl sides out, it was Munton who actually did it by taking 81 wickets.

Munton has rarely been free from injury since then. A

back operation in the spring of 1995 forced him to miss more than half the season. A rib injury kept him out of the NatWest Trophy final. A broken wrist limited his appearance in 1996.

Even this season he has been held back by a hamstring injury and an unsuccessful experiment with a shortened run. But he began to get into his stride in the last championship match against Glamorgan and yesterday he was his old self again as he took seven for 66 in 28 overs on a benign pitch.

It was a magnificent piece of bowling by Munton, 33, who has much in common with Angus Fraser in his adherence to the old-fashioned virtues of length and line. He had already removed

such formidable adversaries as Langer and Gating the day before, and yesterday he bowled Middlesex out after they had resumed, needing a further 123 to avoid the follow-on, with six wickets in hand.

Welch had claimed brown leg-before in the second over of the day, but Weekes was harder to dislodge. He had not made a century since he scored two in a match against Somerset at Uxbridge two years ago, but he had one in his sights as he moved cautiously from his overnight 56 to 89.

Then, after he had batted for almost 5½ hours, facing 265 balls and hitting 12 fours, Munton got him to edge low to second slip where Knight held a good catch and suddenly the lengthy Middlesex tail was at his mercy. He bowled Nash, who had batted stubbornly for more than two

hours, and then took the last four wickets for eight runs in 25 balls to leave Middlesex facing a deficit of 169.

It was asking too much of him to do it again after something like eight hours in the field, but that was what Lara did when he invited Middlesex to follow on and handed him the new ball.

The pitch was still playing easily and this time the prolific Langer and the emerging Goodchild gave Middlesex the start they needed. They had put on 130 when a disbelieving Langer was out for 55 in bizarre fashion, bowled by Giles when the ball appeared to spin back off his pad.

Goodchild went on to 73 before he was caught behind off Giddins and, with Middlesex only 12 runs adrift at the close, Lara may yet regret his decision if they can get enough runs on the board and let Tuftnell loose on the last afternoon.

Hollooake sets clear course for Surrey

BY JOHN STERN

THE OVAL (second day of four): Surrey, with three second-innings wickets in hand, are 342 runs ahead of Derbyshire

IT HAS been a year or more since Ben Hollooake commanded centre stage, but a fine spell of lively medium-pace yesterday brought him his career-best bowling figures of four for 36 and left Surrey, the Britannic Assurance county championship leaders, set fair for another victory.

His brother, Adam, the Surrey captain, interestingly declined to enforce the follow-on once Derbyshire had been bowled out for 139, which left them 194 runs behind on first innings. There was logic, though, in Hollooake Sr's unconventional decision. It was a good, old-fashioned scorcher at the Oval yesterday and he may have felt that he would be better served by allowing his quicker bowlers a decent rest given that there are still two days left. He may also have wanted the pitch to be drier and more worn before Saqlain Mushtaq has another spin on it.

Surrey's second innings, though, lacked distinction and had a wanton look to it. They lost six wickets for 101 but they really ought to have enough runs to secure the win.

The tumble of Derbyshire wickets in the morning was predictable, although the catalyst for the collapse was not Saqlain bowled quite well but he was not unplayable and, in fact, it was Martin Bicknell and Ben Hollooake who did most of the damage. Saqlain changed to the Vauxhall End in the second over of the morning but strangely did not find a great rhythm. Bowling round the wicket, though, he did draw Weston, who top-scored with 37, down the pitch and have him stumped off a ball that went straight across the batsman. He also had Krücken

caught at short leg off a sweep and bowled Roberts to wrap up Derbyshire's first innings. Hollooake bowled straight, hit the pad on a regular basis and, at times, was quite sharp. The inclusion of Rupesh Amin, 23, the left-arm, as a second spinner, allowed Hollooake minor to take the new ball and he has responded well.

He had Slater caught at mid-on on the first evening and came on at the Pavilion End yesterday morning to replace Bicknell, who had knocked Barnett's middle stump out with one that nipped back off the seam.

Hollooake took three for 22 in a spell of nine overs up until



Ben Hollooake: best

lunch, by which time Derbyshire had slumped to 119 for seven, having been 80 for three before Cassar was bowled middle stump with Hollooake's third ball.

His third wicket was the result of poor judgment by the left-hander, Blackwell, who pulled inadvisedly with Bicknell, the catcher, one of two men set back on the leg-side boundary for the miscued fourth victim was DeFreitas.

Bicknell returned after lunch, so denying Hollooake the opportunity to procure his maiden five-wicket bag. In between two Saqlain dismissals, Bicknell bowled Clarke.

McCague and Hooper secure easy win for Kent

BY IVO TENNANT

CANTERBURY (third day of four): Kent (21pts) beat Hampshire (4) by 292 runs

PACE, in the form of Martin McCague, and spin, in the dexterous control of Carl Hooper, were altogether too much for Hampshire yesterday. Needing an improbable 446 to win, they were bowled out for 153 inside three days of what is the only first-class fixture in Canterbury week. For Kent — whose triumph was shaped with a tenth-wicket run-in as they seek their first championship since 1950.

third victory in their last five county championship matches.

Both McCague and Hooper finished with four wickets. The West Indies all-rounder finished with match figures of eight for 43. He professed at the start of the season that, in order to make the same kind of impact with ball as well as bat, he was aiming to take around 50 first-class wickets. That is looking unrealistic now, but there was no doubting his effectiveness.

The Canterbury Festival, or, as it used to be known, the "Grand Cricket Week," was founded at a time when interest in the game was growing rapidly throughout Kent.

That enthusiasm has remained steadfast. Those who consistently bemoan poor attendances at county matches, should have been here, or at Maidstone for that matter, the ground looking pretty full over the last three days.

When Lord Tennyson brought Hampshire here during one cricket week between the wars, he rebuked his partner so loudly for disobeying his call, that the admonishment rang around the ground. He would have had a few words to say yesterday on the batting of his successors, for it was woeful. They had risen to a position of respectability in the championship table through beating

Glamorgan, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. But on this performance one wonders how.

What Hampshire did achieve was to restrict Kent to 227 in their second innings. True, the middle and lower order were after quick runs and, in the case of Marsh and Fleming, achieved them. In the morning wickets fell regularly, Key was out to Hartley's third ball, Hooper was bowled by his compatriot, McLean, and Ealham was held at cover point, driving uppishly.

Kent need not have batted on until they were all out. Indeed, they need not have batted a second time at all. Even without Ealham, who had a rib

injury, the ease of McCague and Headley, supplemented by Hooper's off spin, was too much for Hampshire. Without a proper contribution from their captain, Smith, there was nobody to give a lead. Against the new ball, Stephenson and Laney were caught behind by Marsh.

Then Hooper, with his easy amble to the wicket and economy of action, removed the middle order, snaring the wickets of Smith, Aymes, James and Mascarenhas through catches close to the wicket and, in the case of the captain, a fine diving effort by House at cover point. This left McCague's sheer speed to account for the tail.

READER OFFER THE TIMES PASSPORT TO A SENSATIONAL SUMMER FROM DINOSAURS TO DUNGEONS, CASTLES TO CONCERTS, TRAINS TO TEDDIES... THE TIMES/ZURICH PASSPORT VOUCHER

YESTERDAY'S SCOREBOARDS: Northamptonshire v Sri Lankans, Kent v Hampshire, Middlesex v Warwickshire, Lancashire v Gloucestershire, Essex v Glamorgan, Glamorgan v Essex, Lancashire v Gloucestershire, Surrey v Derbyshire, Sussex v Durham, Worcestershire v Nottinghamshire, Kent v Hampshire, Middlesex v Warwickshire, Lancashire v Gloucestershire, Essex v Glamorgan, Glamorgan v Essex, Lancashire v Gloucestershire, Surrey v Derbyshire, Sussex v Durham, Worcestershire v Nottinghamshire.

Michael Hennerly Bowler... Paul Johnson: 139... BARCLAYCARD... des indicate

Referees were at the centre of attention in France 98. David Elleray tackles the issues raised

Beckham's red mist

I was saddened, but not surprised, by David Beckham's sending off when England played Argentina. We had already seen earlier in the World Cup, with the dismissals of Kluyvert and Zidane, that if a player realises using his arm or foot as a weapon then, regardless of the force used, the player is sent off.

Beckham had been fouled, the Argentinian player was about to be shown the yellow card and as Beckham lay on the floor he suddenly kicked out. It was a moment of madness. Although it was a sneaky little kick and Simeone overreacted, Kim Milton Nielsen, the Danish referee, had no option but to show the red card and Beckham's reaction was clear: he went straight off. He didn't protest and nor did his team-mates.

For days everyone debated Beckham's crime. Part of me was angry and frustrated at his childlike behaviour. However, few of us have not, in a split second, done something foolish that we instantly regretted and I could feel sympathy for him as he would be playing the incident over and over in his mind and wishing that he could turn the clock back.

and from the wrong position whilst England were still celebrating and they were very nearly caught out. Nielsen awarded two penalties, one against Seaman when he came out. Simeone pushed the ball wide and Seaman's momentum brought him down. Any challenge which makes contact with an opponent without the ball being played is a direct free kick, and in the area that means a penalty. Later on Ayala tried to avoid making contact with Michael Owen as he was on an electric run into the penalty area, but Ayala blocked



Beckham fears the worst

his path and down Owen went.

Both penalties were not intentional fouls but they checked the progress of an opponent without the ball being played. The match also contained two handball incidents. The ball struck Adams's hand in the penalty area in the first half but it was a clear case of ball to hand and there was no intent. In the second half Charnot challenged for the ball with his arms high and again there was contact but, again, rightly, Nielsen decided there had been no intent.

The opening group games featured some very tolerant refereeing which reached something of a nadir in the second half of the England v Tunisia game, a match refer-

enced by Masayoshi Okada, from Japan. After half-time there was a series of incidents which revealed Okada's weakness and lack of understanding. On two occasions England players were brought to the ground by tackles from behind which certainly called for a yellow card and towards the end Sol Campbell committed a very poor tackle.

Okada rightly played an advantage and returned with a yellow card which might have been red. However, in the first half there had been one or possibly two tackles by Campbell which were yellow card offences and if Okada had done his job then this final tackle would have seen Campbell sent off.

What was most disturbing was that Okada allowed the Tunisians to foul England's forwards, and Shearer in particular, constantly in a low key but destructive way. Three times Shearer was deliberately stopped by being dragged to the ground or pushed over and on each occasion the foul was deliberately committed to stop his attacking move. An aware referee would have yellow carded each offence for its cynical intent.

Amidst the disappointment of England's defeat by Romania, the refereeing of Marc Batta, of France, shone out like a beacon. He took control of the game right from the start and yellow carded George Hagi after he committed two fouls in quick succession. One feature that did disappoint was when Paul Scholes threw himself to the ground having lost possession in the Romanian penalty area. It was yet another example of excessive reactions and attempts to con the referee. One professional trying to get another into trouble by diving, overreacting or gesticulating in this manner are distasteful actions that will need stamping out before they become endemic.



Off: Beckham leaves Nielsen with no option but dismissal and his team-mates with no grounds for protest



Bilic overreaction

Typical moment

IN THE France v Croatia semi-final, José Manuel García-Aranda, the Spanish referee, officiated in the style that had been so widely praised when he refereed the opening game.

He was not overstrict, indeed somewhat lenient with some tackles, but generated a good atmosphere among the players despite the huge amount of shirt-pulling and blocking at corners, which finally flared late in the second half.

As the players jockeyed for position at a French free-kick, Laurent Blanc reacted to being held by Croatia's Slaven Bilic by pushing him, with an open hand, in the face. In an overdramatic reaction, Bilic fell to the ground clutching the upper part of his head — nowhere near where contact had been made.

García-Aranda sent off Blanc, he had no other choice given the attitude to such aggressive acts throughout this World Cup, but Bilic's reaction brought widespread condemnation. Indeed, this one incident captured in a few seconds the appalling cheating and overreacting that plagued France 98.

Lessons for the future

There was, as expected, much debate about whether full-time referees would raise standards. The emergence of good referees from smaller footballing nations seemed to reinforce the view that it is the person himself, and not whether he is full-time or part-time, which is most important.

I have no doubt that we will move towards more referees becoming full-time, but the best solution might be currently being tried in countries like Norway, where referees have a part-time job and are "employed" by the national FA for part of the week to allow sufficient time for training and match preparation. In the end, no matter how much referees are paid or

how professional they become they are human beings who will make mistakes. Several points emerged which football and referees need to address. On the positive side the fourth official using an electronic board to show how much time remained in each half worked well, and there was little on-field treatment of players.

Few serious injuries occurred, suggesting that the clampdown on violent tackles was successful. The benefits were probably best exemplified by Michael Owen's goal against Argentina, when he was able to run at speed and score, whereas in 1990 he would probably have been chopped down before he reached the penalty area.

There were also a number of negative areas. Shirt-holding and shirt-pulling reached almost epidemic proportions. Associated with this was the considerable blocking, holding and checking that took place at corners and attacking free-kicks, which was almost impossible for the referee to spot or deal with. The issue of diving and over-reacting, basically cheating, needs to be quickly eradicated, probably using video technology. Where else should technology be used? Decisions of fact such as whether the ball crossed the line for a goal seem to be clear examples of where we could use cameras without undermining the authority of the referee or holding up the game too much.

Blatter hits out... and the World Cup becomes a card game

WITH all the slack refereeing in the early matches, it came as no surprise that the newly-elected Fifa president, Sepp Blatter, spoke out strongly on the morning of June 16 — the start of the second phase of group matches. Blatter was reported as hitting out at "too soft" referees and was quoted as saying "they are not applying the ban on tackles from behind. It's not up to them to decide how fouls should be interpreted. There have been tackles from behind so far that deserved red cards."

The first match after Blatter's outburst was Scotland v Norway. Lazio Vagner, from Hungary, is an excellent referee and responded well to Blatter's words without going over the top. He cautioned a number of players for bad tackles and was expert at reading both bad tackles and those with some tactical intent.

The improvement was short-lived, and in the evening Nikolai Levnikov, from Russia, gave a completely inept performance in Brazil's 3-0 win over Morocco. He allowed the Africans to commit all manner of assaults on the Brazilians and when Chiba caught Ronaldo on the upper thigh leaving a six-inch wound, not a card was in sight. It was a wonder no one was sent off, especially as Michel Platini had declared earlier in the day that any referee failing to do his duty would be on the first available flight home.

However, there was little doubt that the referees would feel pressurised by these very

Whistling up a foul new storm



Off: Zidane gets his marching orders on red Thursday

public statements, as well as private meetings at the referees' base with members of the Referees Committee and Fifa officials. The acid test would be whether there would be an over-reaction and the pendulum would swing too far.

On Thursday June 18 it appeared it had when two matches produced five red cards. The excitable Colombian referee, John Jairo Toro Rendón, sent off three players when Denmark played South Africa whilst that evening the Mexican referee, Arturo Brizio Carter, sent off two in the France v Saudi Arabia game.

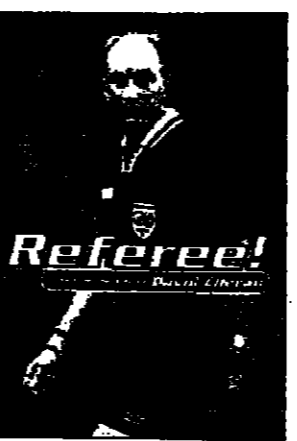
In the Denmark-South Africa game, the Colombian referee's body language showed that he was over-reacting and losing control of himself. He issued red and yellow cards by marching up to the player, standing as tall as he could

and thrusting the card high into the air. It was all too dramatic and served only to provoke players.

The dismissal of Denmark's Miklos Molnar's was a mystery and I was unsure whether it was for the foul or because Toro Rendón thought he saw a stamp. By brandishing the red card he set himself a very high standard so when South African midfielder, Alfred Phiri, raised his arm in a challenge the Danes rushed to the referee demanding a red card and the Colombian had to send him off to be consistent. Later Morten Weghorst committed a straightforward yellow card tackle from behind but by this stage Toro Rendón had lost his composure to such an extent that his judgment had gone and to no one's amazement the red card appeared.

This match increased the pressure on Brizio Carter but he put in one of the better performances to book himself a place in the latter stages. He was firm but calm and steadily won the respect and confidence of the players.

Al-Khilaifi jumped two-footed into a tackle and although he only clipped Bibente Lizarazu, if the French defender had not taken avoiding action his leg could have been broken. It was the type of tackle that strict referees should punish strongly to protect players. Later Zidane reacted to a tackle and stamped, not violently but certainly deliberately, on Foad Amin, the Saudi captain. Aimé Jacquet, the French coach, said afterwards that Zidane deserved to be sent off.



Referee! by David Elleray, is published by Bloomsbury Publishing (£16.99) on August 13. To reserve a copy call Excel Cash Sales on 01933 82400.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Here is a lead problem. Your right-hand opponent opens One Club. One Diamond on your left. Three No-Trumps on your right. Four No-Trumps (ordinary Blackwood) on your left. Five Hearts (two aces) on your right. Six No-Trumps on your left. This is your hand:

♠ Q 10 9 6 5 ♣ A 10 9 2 ♢ J ♣ 10 9 3

The Three No-Trump rebid suggested a solid suit. What would you lead? This was the full deal:

Dealer East	Game All	IMPs
♠ K J 4 3	♠ 8 2	
♥ Q 5	♥ K 8 7 6 4	
♦ A K Q 6 5 4	♦ 10 8 7 2	
♣ 5	♣ 7 6	
♠ Q 10 8 6 5	♠ A 7	
♥ A 10 9 2	♥ J 3	
♦ J	♦ 8 3	
♣ 10 9 3	♣ A K Q J 8 4 2	

Contract: Six No-Trumps by South. Lead: ?

This deal comes from the 1982 Rosenblum Teams (the third most important of the events that count as a world championship) when France and the United States faced each other. West was Philippe Soulet, of France, and a huge swing hung on his choice of lead. He argued that there was not much point in leading his singleton diamond, even if it did set up a winner in his partner's hand, he would not be able to cash it. A spade lead was a possibility, but, even if his partner had the king, declarer might well have 12 winners to cash. He decided to play his partner for the king of hearts, the one card that would always beat the ace of hearts. Soulet laid down the ace of hearts and the defenders soon took five tricks in the suit for +400.

At the other table, the French North was declarer in the same contract and East, Kit Woolsey, led a passive diamond. That was a swing of 18 IMPs to France, the eventual champions.

This hand comes from a new book, *Famous Leads and Defences* (Victor Gollancz, £7.99), the third in a series by David Bird, the previous two being *Famous Bidding Decisions* and *Famous Play Decisions*. All are available from Chess & Bridge, tel: 0171-388-2404 or the IPBM Bookshop, tel: 0115-942 2615.

TGR Promotions is holding an auction pairs tournament at the Landmark Hotel, London, from August 14-16. The organisers guarantee a first prize of £100,000. Entry fee £1,000 per pair. Enquiries: 0171-706 2404.

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

British results

After a tough struggle Grandmaster Matthew Sadler and Grandmaster Nigel Short tied for first place in the Smith & Williamson British championship in Torquay. Short had been in the lead but lost in the final round to Tony Miles which enabled Sadler by means of a brisk win to catch up with him. The tie was resolved on Saturday when a two-game mini-match led to Short's ultimate victory by 1½ points to ½. Short is thus the new British chess champion, regaining the title he first contested in 1977. Over the next two weeks this column will be giving a selection of games from the championship.

White: Matthew Sadler
Black: Pravin Thipsay
British championship
Torquay 1998

King's Indian Defence

1	d4	Nf6
2	c4	g6
3	Nc3	Bg7
4	e4	0-0
5	Bf3	0-0
6	Bg5	0-0
7	0-0	0-0
8	0-0	0-0
9	0-0	0-0
10	0-0	0-0
11	0-0	0-0
12	0-0	0-0
13	0-0	0-0
14	0-0	0-0
15	0-0	0-0
16	0-0	0-0
17	0-0	0-0
18	0-0	0-0
19	0-0	0-0
20	0-0	0-0
21	0-0	0-0
22	0-0	0-0
23	0-0	0-0
24	0-0	0-0
25	0-0	0-0
26	0-0	0-0

Diagram of final position

Times book

The *Times Winning Moves 2* contains 240 chess puzzles from international grandmaster Raymond Keene's daily column in *The Times*, and is available now from bookshops or from B. T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 01376 321276 at £6.99 plus postage and packing).

Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Hubner - Korchnoi, Switzerland, 1998. Although now 67 years old, Viktor Korchnoi retains a place among the top players in the world. Here, however, he has overlooked a cunning trap. What did White play?

Solution on page 41

Caddick feels that he deserves a further chance to lead the England attack

Loner anxious to mix it with world's best



Caddick's technical ability as a bowler is not in question but perceived doubts about his character and commitment appear to be held against him when selection for England beckons the Somerset player. Photograph: Chris Ison

There is a problem with Andy Caddick and it has little to do with his ability to bowl. Technically, Caddick has everything necessary to lead the England attack and yet, through the peaks and troughs of this summer, he has rated barely a single selectorial mention. To say that he is disappointed would be a gross understatement.

Caddick is confused, frustrated, verging on bitterness, and the superficial facts indicate that he has a case. A year ago, he was the leading England wicket-taker against Australia. Now, despite further success in a poor Somerset side and his own conviction that he is bowling better than ever, he hears it said that his England days are done.

"There have been stories put around that I will never play Test cricket again," he said. "My Mum, in New Zealand, has had press cuttings saying so. That saddens me. I don't know how anyone can make such an assumption but, if it's true, then whatever I do won't matter."

Left carefully unspoken is the suspicion that he is being marginalised for reasons other than the quality of his bowling. Is he being excluded simply because, by his own admission, he performed below expectations in the Caribbean last winter? Or is there a deeper reason, such as distrust of his commitment and character? Is he, in fact, a misfit that the management is no longer prepared to accommodate?

Caddick does not often give interviews. He has a disregard for the press and, acknowledging that he sometimes comes across as abrupt and abrasive, he is ready to believe that the feeling is mutual. This week, however, in the sunshine of Taunton, he opened up in the style of a man who needs to be heard.

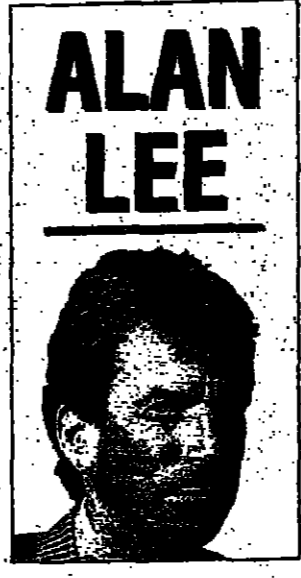
Plainly, he felt he should be in Leeds, preparing for the decisive Test match of the summer, rather than heading for Leicester and another county game, another clutch of wickets, another cry in the dark. Headingley holds few fond memories for him — he has twice been dropped after Tests there and, last summer, he reacted angrily to being left out on the morning of the match — but he has missed Test cricket and is self-assured enough to feel that England have missed him. Others, equally plainly, feel different.

Four weeks ago, Caddick met the chairman of selectors, David Grayney, to seek clarification. Grayney did his best, telling him that his place was there to be won back and suggesting he should telephone the England captain, Alec Stewart, and the coach, David Lloyd. It would appear, however, that the process did little to reassure Caddick.

"I am very frustrated about it," he admitted. "I want to play for England and I wish I was there now, proving they could do even better with me in the side. Sadly, if they are looking for a Test spot, it always seems to be mine that goes. I do sometimes wonder what I've got to do."

Well, here's the rub. Caddick is a potentially fine bowler, no question. Angus Fraser, no less, conceded recently that two English seam bowlers of modern times are better than him, and named Caddick as one. But while he can be swift, with steep bounce and sharp movement, a handful for all, Caddick is the antithesis of Fraser in the area of reliability. A captain is never quite sure which Caddick he will get, the raging bull or the wayward kitten.

He can also be a difficult character. Caddick is not a natural mixer, he says things which provoke and irritate. There



are times when he seems deliberately obtuse and when his nonconformity sets him at odds with the team ethic. He is not unaware of how others perceive him but despite advice from several sources to improve his public relations, he remains unwilling to change.

His personality presents confusing contrasts, for one moment he can appear the gauche introvert and the next he can be blunt to the point of incivility. He is unapologetic, identifying it as native frankness. "I've been brought up to be honest. Maybe I speak my mind too much. I'm a shy person at heart and that may be my problem. Perhaps people think badly of me because I don't show my feelings. If we lose a Test, I won't sit around and cry my eyes out. Similarly, if we win, I won't be out there leading the singing and spraying the champagne. There are some emotional types in the England side but that just isn't me. At heart, I'm a loner. If things go wrong, I will tear myself apart but I won't show it."

He came back with some success on the tour of the West Indies that winter but, already, alarm bells were ringing. His shins ached chronically; stress fractures were diagnosed but when, finally, he did have surgery, it failed. Come the summer of 1995, his career was on the line.

"I threw in the towel four times and came back four times. I was still in pain and at the end of that season I did think maybe it was all over."

A second operation cured the problem. By July 1996 he was back in the England side — for one game. "It was Headingley again," and I got six wickets against Pakistan; but it wasn't enough to secure my place for the next game," he recalled with some irony.

That has been his story. He is less secure about himself than he would pretend and that has been evident in the progress of his career — stop-start and now a stall. In the process, he has never made friends or allies easily. He fell out badly with his first coach at Somerset, Bob Cotnam, who subsequently left the club, and has never responded eagerly to tuition. "If the wheel's not broken, don't fix it," he has stated maxim.

Last winter, though, his wagon lost a wheel or two. "Over a period of years it's easy to get into bad ways and I found I was bowling too full and down the leg-side. My action was wrong, a minor glitch but a significant one, and on a tour it's very difficult to step back from the involvement, identify something needs attention and do something about it."

"It was only when I came back and spent some time with Peter Wishart, our domestic coach at Taunton, that it was fixed. He was half a yard taller than me and I'm bowling from a low angle. I'm doing my job well and I'm a better bowler than I was when I took 24 wickets in the Ashes series last summer."

Still, there is no sign of a recall, indeed no sign that Caddick is anywhere near the front of the queue. It troubles him sorely and as he sets his targets — 40 Tests, 200 wickets for England — he may also be making alternative plans if the situation does not change.

"I feel the Ashes tour this winter is my aim. I'm performing well enough to go, if I don't make it, I'll have to ask myself why and it may decide how my future will go." Caddick and his wife have a baby due next week. He has a benefit next year. There is much to anticipate. But he remains a tormented soul.

ALAN LEE

I've had a struggle for identity in the England side and sometimes I do feel like an outsider

"I've had a struggle for identity in the England side and sometimes I do feel like an outsider. It does occur to me that my New Zealand background might be a disadvantage against me, that I'm not viewed as being quite English, so I have to work a bit harder to convince people."

Why there should be any difference between Caddick and others who came to England to further their careers — Tony Greig, Allan Lamb, Chris and Robin Smith and Graeme Hick to name but a few — is not clear, but this is a matter that grates with him. "I couldn't give a damn about my background and I don't think anyone else should."

Caddick actually has two English parents, which is why he was only required to serve four years' residential qualification when the decision was taken in the late 1980s. He had come here, as many New Zealanders do, simply on a year's travelling after school, but he created such an impression while playing

club cricket around London that the possibility of switching nationality soon arose.

"I played a trial game for Somerset against an Australian universities side and got smacked around but then I played against Surrey seconds at the Oval and took eight for 36. I never looked back." For quite some years, indeed he did not. Caddick took 96 wickets for the second XI in 1991, then 71 in his first county season. He was instantly picked for the England A team and, in 1993, for his Test debut. Only then did things go awry.

"It was a huge step up, especially against that Australian side, and I had a bad introduction. I had a lot to live up to. When things don't immediately go right, the press start asking questions and then you start questioning yourself, rather than relying on the ability that got you there. Being left out for the first time came hard. I'd got five wickets in four Tests and I thought that might be the last I'd see of Test cricket."

He came back with some success on the tour of the West Indies that winter but, already, alarm bells were ringing. His shins ached chronically; stress fractures were diagnosed but when, finally, he did have surgery, it failed. Come the summer of 1995, his career was on the line.

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BOXING

Stern tests awaiting British duo

By SRIKUMAR SEN
BOXING CORRESPONDENT

TWO of Frank Maloney's leading men, Paul Ingle and Patrick Mullings, take on opponents who could seriously damage their prospects at Scarborough tonight. Ingle, the unbeaten featherweight from Scarborough, who is being touted as a challenger for Naseem Hamed, meets Rakhim Mingaliev, of the Ukraine; Mullings, a superbantamweight from Harrow, faces Simon Ramoni, of South Africa.

The two visitors made a big impression on their last appearances in British rings. Both lost on the referees' cards but the public did not agree and showed their disapproval. Indeed, they appeared clear winners. Mingaliev over Mullings and Ramoni over Ingle. The highly regarded Commonwealth super-bantamweight champion from Manchester.

The rugged Ukrainian is remembered for the fight he gave P.J. Gallagher, the former British super-featherweight champion, whom he put on the floor. If Ingle can stop him it would show Maloney that he is ready for a world title challenge. The Scarborough man's non-stop movement makes him difficult to hit cleanly and he has an excellent temperament. If he had a knockout punch as well, few featherweights would be able to stand up to him.

Mullings, who sometimes fights like a miniature Nigel Benn, relying on getting closer to land his punches, could find Ramoni too clever for him.

GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

Today

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 p.m. unless stated

* denotes a fixture

Football cup numbers in brackets

Nationwide League

First division

(1) Barnsley v West Bromwich

(2) Bradford v Stockport

(3) Burnley v Luton

(4) Bury v Huddersfield

(5) Crystal Palace v Bolton

(6) Sheff Wed v Rotherham

(7) Port Vale v Birmingham

(8) Portsmouth v Walsley

(9) Shrewsbury v Swindon

(10) Sunderland v Queens Park Rangers

(11) Wolverhampton v Tottenham

Second division

(12) Bournemouth v Lincoln

(13) Doncaster v Gillingham

(14) Colchester v Chesham

(15) Gillingham v Walsley

(16) Mansfield v Luton

(17) Manchester City v Blackpool

(18) Northampton v Stoke

(19) Notts County v York

(20) Preston v York

(21) Wigan v Millwall

(22) Wiltam v Reading

(23) Wycombe v Southend

Third division

(24) Brentford v Mansfield

(25) Carlisle v Brighton

(26) Chester v Luton Orient

(27) Doncaster v Gillingham

(28) Hartlepool v Carlisle

(29) Paarl v Huddersfield

(30) Plymouth v Exeter

(31) Rotherham v Hull

(32) Scarborough v Southend

(33) Shrewsbury v Southport

(34) Swindon v Walsley

(35) Torquay v Cambridge Utd

Scottish League Cup

Second round

(36) Berwick v Falkirk

(37) Dundee v Aberdeen

(38) Dundee Utd v Strking (A.D)

(39) East Fife v Motherwell

(40) Greenock Morton v Ross County

(41) Hamilton v Livingston

(42) Inverness CT v Aberdeen

(43) Livingston v Dunfermline

(44) Raith v Clydebank

(45) St. Mirren v St. Johnstone

(46) St. Mirren v St. Johnstone

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Arsenal and Manchester United focus on the future as new season beckons

Wenger looks for faith, hope and absence of charity

By Oliver Holt, Football Correspondent

THEY had to usher last year's Double-winners away in the end because a batch of wedding parties were coming to take their place on the hotel patio. By then, Arsène Wenger and his players had spoken so much about their faith in the future and how you had to keep on working at it, trusting each other and operating as a team that they would have blended straight in.

It was their obsession yesterday, as they prepared for the start of a new season in tomorrow's FA Charity Shield against Manchester United, to emphasise that they cared not a jot about the triumphs that had been laden upon them in the past months. The FA Cup, the Premiership title, the FA Cup, the French victory in the World Cup final, all had to be forgotten.

There was almost an air of asceticism about it all, an attempt to purge themselves of what had gone before so that they could concentrate on what lay ahead. Emmanuel Petit, the man whom many picked as the outstanding midfielder player in the World Cup, summed up the forced humility best with the funniest one-liner of the day. He was asked whether any

other clubs had tried to buy him over the summer so he thought for a minute, shrugging his shoulders. "Maybe Barnet," he said.

Although it might be an opportunity to show that that outmoded concept, altruism, is still clinging on to a tiny fragment of the damned souls of Arsenal and Manchester United, the Charity Shield, a glorified friendly in the interest of good causes, is hardly the right stage for the glory boys to prove that there is still fire in their belly.

Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of that World Cup victory, Wenger aired his concerns that it would be hard for Petit and Patrick Vieira, the two men who combined for the goal that finally killed Brazil off, to motivate themselves for the new Premiership season, given the magnitude of their achievements. Yesterday, though, the Arsenal coach, said he was confident.

"On Sunday, I hope you will see that they are true World Cup winners and true champions," Wenger said. "The test of that will be if they can come back and play against Manchester United as if they have won nothing. I think they are intelligent enough to realise

that that will not be easy. But they will recognise, too, that you can only live for what is in front of you."

Wenger smiled at suggestions that Arsenal might have fallen into the same trap they stumbled into when they last won the league title, under George Graham, failing to capitalise on their successes by buying big-name players because the club was unwilling to break its pay structure.

They appear to have followed the same road this summer, adding only Nelson Vivas, the Argentinian defender, to their ranks and leaving themselves short of cover, particularly in the forward line where they have lost Ian Wright to West Ham United. Wenger said he was hoping to remedy that problem and would not rule out another move for Patrick Kluijvert, even though he seems to have patched up his differences with AC Milan.

Wenger also did little to dampen speculation and fear that he might leave Arsenal in 2000 to take up the challenge of coaching Japan as they prepare to host the 2002 World Cup. He admitted that, as an adviser of the Japanese Football Federation, he was in touch with them frequently.

Wenger did indicate that he was about to commit himself to some form of extension of his Highbury contract, which runs out at the end of the season. But it may only be for an extra 12 months, leaving him free to move to the Far East in the summer of 2000.

Wenger acknowledged that victory in tomorrow's game would give an important psychological edge to the winners, although he was keen to mention Chelsea and Liverpool as other dangers to Arsenal's retention of their league crown. He insisted, too, that Arsenal would not follow United's example and devote themselves to the pursuit of the European Cup Champions' League. "My priority is the Premiership," he said.

United, for once, may go into the match as underdogs. But with Roy Keane back at the heart of their midfield after so long out through injury, and the penitent David Beckham on the right flank and desperate to begin to repair his reputation, it could still turn into an explosive encounter.

The most interesting part of Alex Ferguson's selection will come in midfield and attack, where he has to decide on a partner for Andy Cole. He leapt to the defence of Teddy Sheringham yesterday but he has also dropped heavy hints that he may push Ryan Giggs further forward to accommodate Jesper Blomqvist, a summer signing.

If Giggs starts on the left, then it seems like a choice between Paul Scholes and Sheringham to play in the hole behind Cole. Whatever the formation, Ferguson and his players — for different reasons, perhaps — will be just as keen to forget last season and forge ahead into the future.



Adams, the Arsenal captain, limbers up for another season of great expectation at Highbury



Wenger gives his newest signing an early taste of what might be

FA CHARITY SHIELD	
 ARSENAL	 MANCHESTER UNITED
D Seaman	P Schmeichel
L Dixon, M Keown, A Adams, N Winterburn	G Neville, H Berg, J Stann, P Neville
R Parlour, P Vieira, E Petit, M Overmars	D Beckham, R Keane, N Butt, R Giggs
D Bergkamp, N Anelka	P Scholes
	A Cole
Referee: G Poll	
TELEVISION	
Sky Sports 1: live from 12pm	Highlights: ITV 10.45pm
KICK-OFF: 1PM	

Blatter puts Africa on course to host 2006 World Cup

SEPP BLATTER, the new president of Fifa, the world governing body of football, yesterday indicated that an African country will be favoured to host the World Cup in 2006. The news will come as a blow to England's campaign to host the tournament.

"In 2006, if the World Cup is in England or Germany, or if the World Cup is played in Africa, which would be the logical approach, you would still be in the right time-frame to receive the matches," Blatter said. "I would say, if the conditions are fulfilled by one of the associations bidding in Africa, then, logically, Fifa should give the World Cup to an African country."

"But it is not my decision. The decision will be of the executive committee and will be taken in the first half of the year 2000. England is definitely a good candidate, but other associations will have good documentation. We definitely know the ability of England to organise international football competition after the European championship in 1996."

Manchester United, who are due to meet KLS Lodz in the first leg of the European Cup preliminary round at Old Trafford on Wednesday, could qualify for the Champions' League without kicking a ball, Fifa last night refused to extend its midnight deadline for the Government and Polish national football federation (PZPN) to resolve their dispute. "Effectively, next week's games will be off if no deal is done," a Fifa spokesman in Zurich said.

Coventry City yesterday completed a transfer double involving World Cup players. Bryan Richardson, the Coventry chairman, finally landed the signature of Robert Jarni, the Croatia international, after flying to Spain to agree a £2.6 million fee with Real Betis. Earlier, Coventry had paid Portsmouth £300,000 for Paul Hall, the Jamaica winger.

Hall will play in the friendly against Espanol at Highfield Road today. Jarni will be introduced to supporters before the match, but will not be eligible to play for Coventry until August 29.

Richardson said: "I am really pleased to get Gordon Strachan [the manager] back. We have got the man we wanted to bring back again, under the circumstances."

Alan Shearer will start the season with a fractured nose and Stéphane Guivarch, the France World Cup striker, who has an ankle injury, may be missing altogether from Newcastle United's opening FA Cup Premiership game.

Shearer, the England captain, collided with Curtis Fleming in the pre-season match with Middlesbrough last Sunday but Kenny Dalglish, the Newcastle manager, said: "It's a slight crack that doesn't require surgery. He won't miss any games."

Everton, the Premier League champions, face Arsenal, the FA Women's Cup and League Cup winners, at 11.05am tomorrow before the Charity Shield match at Wembley Stadium. Arsenal beat Everton on penalties in the quarter-finals of the Mansfield Leisure Service Trophy competition last weekend.

Here is the news coming live from Old Trafford

Kevin McCarra looks at the latest service for Manchester United fans

Peter Schmeichel avoids Old Trafford. There is no disaffection on the Manchester United goalkeeper's part, just a recognition of the personal journey times that govern a footballer's life. The distance from car park to main door at the stadium is a few hundred yards, but Schmeichel measures it as a great passage of time.

"I could be there for an hour signing autographs," he said. "When I first came to the club, I used to go to Old Trafford every day and say hello to the girls in the office. That has been made virtually impossible now." There is nothing curmudgeonly about Schmeichel's decision and he claims still to be glad to meet the supporters who always gather at The Cliff, United's training ground.

None the less, a celebrated player realises that the merest errand can easily turn into an inopportune public engagement and he must make his plans accordingly. People have never been more eager for contact with their football heroes and that insatiable interest makes men such as Schmeichel seek seclusion.

It is only seven years since he signed for United and in that period society's infatuation with the game has ensured that Old Trafford can no longer be a workplace



Ryan Giggs receives some advice before appearing in front of the MUTV cameras

where an employee may saunter freely. The club's annual turnover reached £88 million last year and United have to find a means of dealing with an audience that is as vast as the wealth it creates.

In the process, a further profit may be turned. By entering into a joint venture with BSkyB and Granada Media Group, United is to become the first football club in the world with its own daily television channel. This subscription service will begin broadcasting next month. The sardonic response from followers of other teams is anticipated.

With allegations of fawning coverage, they will claim that United already have television stations at their disposal. Beyond the bandying of insults, however, there are common interests that unite clubs. Manchester United Television (MUTV) is an experiment whose outcome will be studied by Arsenal, Liverpool, Newcastle United and all those who might be able to sustain channels of their own.

If MUTV cannot succeed, then no other club need waste its time on this type of project. "Few of us would sign up for a Real Madrid channel or an Ajax channel," Darren Fletcher said, the MUTV news editor, no longer be a workplace

WHAT'S ON

MUTV

Start: September 10.
Cost: £4.99 per month.

Availability: On the existing cable system or through the forthcoming digital services offered by BSkyB and on digital.

A TYPICAL EVENING PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

- 6.00-6.15: Game On (Introduction)
- 6.30-7.00: Kids Clinic (coaching)
- 7.30-8.00: Red Legends (great players of yesterday)
- 10.00-10.45: It's Your Stout (discussion programme)
- 11.15-11.30: Jump 'n' Pump (aerobics)

has even come up with programme ideas.

"Alex has a certain opinion about the media," Ridley explained carefully, "and he sees that MUTV will help him get his views across on signings and other matters. He feels that, if it is on MUTV and if it is an uncut interview, then people will see precisely what it was that he said."

The relationship between the channel and the club which partly owns it is bound to incite scepticism. MUTV, for example, might well be given the extended interview with David Beckham that other journalists merely crave, but will they be granted it only if they dodge controversy and promise to fawn?

Schmeichel concedes that MUTV will be a useful way for his team-mates to market themselves. "I am sure that loads of our young players will be only too pleased to co-operate," he said in amusement.

The goalkeeper, however, knows that there will be limits to the co-siness. "MUTV cannot be wholly uncritical," he said, "because then no one would watch it."

It is a consideration that weighs heavily on Ridley. "We will not be stopped from asking questions," he said. "Our subscribers deserve explanations."

Editorial independence is a commercial necessity. If it is to serve the club, MUTV cannot serve its viewers.

Alex has a certain opinion about the media. He sees that MUTV will help him get his views across on signings and other matters

Turbulent managerial career comes full circle to kick-start a new Palace revolution

Coach Venables free of greater ambitions



Some say you can never go back but Venables, who is no longer attracted to the executive life, has returned to coach at the club where he made his reputation. Photograph: Adrian Sherratt

At the back of the bar, in a quiet, elegant Knightsbridge street behind Harvey Nichols, Terry Venables was beginning to get exasperated. Trying to tell a waiter from Barcelona what a spritzer was, trying in Spanish, too, and still getting blank looks and too much white wine cascading over his ice. Even little things can get complicated when Terry's around.

Not that he cares. He likes complicated, hates simple. He would have got out years ago, gone to live in Spain, if he'd wanted a simple life. That's the reason, really, he thought he'd have a go at managing Australia and being chairman of Portsmouth in the same year. Even for him, two challenges of that size was going some. Now, to the delight and relief of his legions of admirers, he is back doing what they believe he does best: coaching, just coaching. Crystal Palace face Bolton Wanderers, the other promotion favourites, at Selhurst Park today in his first match in charge and even though the Nationwide League first division will be hellishly difficult to get out of, it seems happily tame by comparison with what has gone before.

But Venables resents this insistence that he should confine himself to one aspect of football. He has found it puzzling since his playing days when people suggested he shouldn't be writing his books or his screenplays. They said he should be a full-time footballer. Then Venables pointed out that would involve spending his afternoons at the billiard hall or in the betting shop.

Back at Palace after his experiment in being an employer at Portsmouth petered out, he is ready to try to build a team for the 2000s. 20 years after others said he had assembled the team of the Eighties in South London. And now people

are at it again, using his second coming as a reason to ponder what he might have achieved had he, like Alex Ferguson, devoted himself to managing these past 20 years.

"I can be satisfied just being a coach at Crystal Palace," he said, "but only because I have done all those other things. It depends how inquiring you are. Some people are not interested but I think you have to get things out of your system."

"I am not talking about football now. I'm talking about life. I have always believed that I would rather die being sorry for what I did do than being sorry for what I didn't do. That's just the way I feel."

"I have got most things out of my system. I feel very satisfied. I will be a coach now. I will not be a chairman of a football club or a director because I didn't like it. I didn't like many aspects of it. But I didn't know I wouldn't until I did it and I am delighted I had a go. I'm bloody glad I had a go."

Even if it is the quality that has snagged his career, it is Venables' readiness to have a go that is one of his most admirable qualities. There is a romanticism about the way he seems to overstretch himself, striving for things that wriggle just out of his reach. There is a darker side to that striving, too. His bitter and long-running arguments with Alan Sugar compromised his reputation and led some to question his honesty. It made him look a bit like a shadowy second-hand car dealer, ducking and diving, operating on the margins. Ultimately, those problems cost him the England coach's job he loved and when he took over at Portsmouth two years ago, his enemies made sure his financial dealings there were thrust under the microscope. Once again, his experiment with being an executive ended in acrimony.

At Palace, it should be different. He knows the place, knows his job, knows he loves his job. The first time round, he took them from the old third division to the top flight in his three seasons in charge between 1976 and 1980. All it took was a bad start to his last season in charge for the Palace board to start touting his job around and he moved on to Queens Park Rangers. He has a fund of happy memories. He was introduced to this generation of Palace supporters at the club open day last Sunday, led on to the pitch to a standing ovation and asked to take his seat on a small stage in front of the main stand which was packed with more than 5,000 eager Eagles. Venables had them eating out of the palm of his hand. I looked round at the faces in the crowd as he told one story about a game against Wrexham that Palace needed to win to clinch the third division championship in his first year in charge. It was 2-2 with four minutes left, then Palace went 3-2 up and then, in injury time, Rachid Harkouk scored with a bicycle kick from a Kenny Sansom long throw. When Venables said you could forget the European Cup final with Barcelona, the FA Cup Final with Tottenham, even England's matches during Euro 96, that was the most exciting game he had ever been involved in, the stand at Selhurst Park erupted in applause. He agreed to take over as Palace coach before they had been relegated from the FA Carling Premiership last season, before Mark Goldberg's takeover from Ron Noades had been made official. Only later was he made aware of strong interest from Real Madrid and Deportivo La Coruña but he had already given his word. "I just wanted to be around for a while, near my family. When I got back from Australia I met with Mark about four nights on the trot

and his enthusiasm was refreshing. I just had a feeling for it. I looked at who was there, what they were doing for the club and I went for it.

"There is a five-year contract in which there are breaks. We have got to see if we like each other. I don't know if they are capable of satisfying my ambitions but there is a chance to do something here. I will start the job and if I was there just one year, I would like to put it on a good footing. I don't mean just the first team. I think we are going to get some good young kids coming through, too."

"We shouldn't forget that money was part of the equation. I think there was a feeling from some other clubs that I would want too much money. Maybe that's right because

I think it is about time that someone broke the mould with the money for managers because that is still in the dark ages. "I didn't do the Australia job for a lot of money so when it came to this season I thought it was about time I got a serious contract. Unless you actually stop and refuse to get into the thing of 'let's do it for a couple of hundred grand a year even though the players are earning a million and a half, two million', you are never going to break it."

He also says he is better as a coach now than he has ever been, that he sees more, learns more, with every year he ages, that he loves the game passionately. "I think life's a clever trick. You do the things you want. You get money, you retire. What do you do with that retirement? You meet your mate at the pub and drink too much. You've got money now, so you eat too much and then you get fat and then you spend your money on getting slim. So I am just going to work."

It sounds simple. But it may not stay that way.

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OLIVER HOLT



There is a darker side to that striving, too. His bitter and long-running arguments with Alan Sugar compromised his reputation and led some to question his honesty. It made him look a bit like a shadowy second-hand car dealer, ducking and diving, operating on the margins. Ultimately, those problems cost him the England coach's job he loved and when he took over at Portsmouth two years ago, his enemies made sure his financial dealings there were thrust under the microscope. Once again, his experiment with being an executive ended in acrimony.

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'I have got most things out of my system. I am very satisfied'

All together now, it's time to start singing the blues

Mark Hodgkinson takes the plunge as Manchester City sink to new depths



No I would have been far more practical. Two thin pieces of cloth in parallel might have spared my mother a whole evening at the sewing machine, and most of the next morning too. In truth, it was not even open discussion: it had to be No 8. Colin Bell wore No 8 and he was the most important man on earth. This shirt business had dragged on for some time. Back then, football clubs and merchandising were mere nodding acquaintances. Clubs fretted that anything more than the obligatory enamel badge, plastic pennant, and industrial-strength woolly scarf would be memorabilia overload. Replica shirts, like Franny Lee designs, were almost non-existent. Eventually, a sky blue Manchester City shirt was located, neatly pressed in a drawer at a shop in Moston Lane, north Manchester. The shopkeeper ran his fingers across it lovingly, as if it held the healing properties of the Golden Fleecce. A City shirt really meant something in those days. A rough No 8 was cut out of a piece of cloth. Sewing it on to the shirt took forever and, though I don't admit it, I was disappointed

with the finished item. The number leaned and the two circles were twisted and pulled. Colin Bell's No 8 was neat and orderly, mine was drunk and disorderly. Manchester City was my granddad's club. They were made for each other. United, as he saw it, were brash and full of themselves, while City were perpetual underdogs. He had a pathological dislike of United's Bobby Charlton, though they shared the same haircut. On windy days, he would grumble that the breeze was disturbing his Bobby Charlton as strands broke loose at will. "All he can bloody do is kick it and run after it," he said of this footballing great. He liked dribblers, players who could fool opponents with a flick of the instep, or a shimmy of the hips. City had these in abundance, he claimed, and they were usually small men with outside hearts. We went on long walks, across railway tracks, over wasteland. While others saw No Entry signs, he saw This Way, Please. City this, City that, players he had seen down the years. He would skip past a shopping trolley, dummy an oil can. All the time: "Don't be

like everyone else. Don't do the obvious. Don't support United."

Among workmates and neighbours predominantly of a United persuasion, there was no greater statement than holding aloft the blue flag. It was never nasty, though; his heart was big enough to embrace the other lot, as he called them. George Best was a good 'un; Nobby Siles ("He went to school just over there") was a battler; but Charlton, dear me, shake of the head: kick and bloody run, with a half-decent shot.

When I was 10, we moved away from Manchester. So, like a childhood friendship, City and me drifted apart. At first, I watched their deterioration with concern, but supporting Rochdale FC is a taxing business. There is not a lot of emotional fuel left to generate more than a passing interest in another club.

Sometimes, in a rather twisted, malevolent way, I have even enjoyed City's de-

cline. I have greeted every disaster with the kind of under-the-breath chortle we normally reserve for ex-girlfriends who have had, -hee, hee- another slice of bad luck. We still hold a place in our hearts for them, of course, but love and hate seem so wonderfully interchangeable.

A fellow reporter, one who is impelled to call at Maine Road on a regular basis, provided a witty summary of the malaise in Moss Side. "It's a cross between the Polit Bureau, Fawley Towers, Hi-De-Hi, and One Foot in the Grave." He laughed, before coming over all serious and all-but suggesting that the ground emanated a deadly blue mist. "Don't go near there," was his final counsel, as the wind howled and curtains trembled.

Blackpool visit Maine Road this afternoon as City begin their campaign in the Nationwide League second division. City supporters accepted a good while ago that their club is a Picasso painting (during his blue period); upside down, back to front, anyway you like, so they find nothing overly surreal about a game in the league against Blackpool. Their catholicism may be tested further when Macclesfield Town, Walsall, Gillingham et al pull on to the club car park.

They go into the season with a new chairman, David Bernstein, who has promised to restore stability. City fans are looking to a future of resounding wins and a team that passes and dribbles and tackles. They want their club to rediscover its nobility among the journeymen of the third-best division of English football, or, put another way, the second worst.

Fortunately, Bell is there to help. After a messy, bungled exit some time ago, he has been reinstated in an "ambassadorial" role. He no longer wears No 8, but the sportsmanship, finesse and dedication he personified, do not need a number. It can move through the corridors and dressing-rooms of a football ground in a suit and the sweater and slacks; dignity needs no dressing up.

"NOTHING SHORT OF PERFECTION"

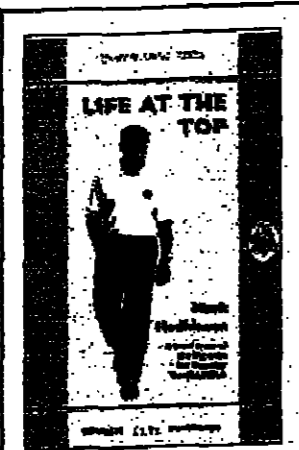
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Mark Hodgkinson's series in The Times about Barnsley forms the basis of his new book, Life at the Top.



Bell, right, the Maine Road ambassador, weaves the old magic on Frank Clark, of Newcastle United, back in 1970

FOOTBALL

Bolton's big Fish happy to swim with the minnows

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

WITH the World Cup finals still fresh in the mind, and the shockwaves of a possible European super league reverberating around the corridors of power, the arrival of the 1998-99 Nationwide League season has perhaps been overshadowed. Anyway, does anyone really care about the poor relations, the 72 other clubs that make up the professional pyramid?

Football League officials will naturally answer in the affirmative, proudly pointing to increased attendance figures over 12 successive seasons and a new sponsor, Worthington, for its League Cup competition. The game has never been more in vogue and the interest never higher, even in its lower reaches, as it enters its centennial season.

Prime objective among the wannabes is to claim a place in the FA Carling Premiership, a dream considered by many but realised by only a chosen few. Having savoured the experience, albeit with a bitter conclusion, the desire becomes that much greater. Thus, Bolton Wanderers, Crystal Palace and Barnsey will be attempting to make a swift return to the land of milk and honey.

For Mark Fish, the Bolton defender, life among the small fry will be a new experience. He joined Bolton from Lazio,



Fish: staying put

the Serie A club, for a fee of £2.5 million a year ago and had not expected to participate in a campaign of struggle, culminating in relegation from the Premiership, cruelly on goal difference, on the last day of the season.

Three games with South Africa in the World Cup, playing among the best and most well-paid players in the sport, could have been expected to prompt a decision to seek pastures new, but he has stayed loyal. "It was desperately disappointing to be relegated, especially in the way it happened," he said, "but I'm looking forward to playing in the Nationwide League."

"I only arrived back last week but training has gone well. The team look convincing, organised as a unit and we have played well together in pre-season. Hopefully, we will be back in the top flight in 12 months."

"Yes, I did have one or two options in the summer but, in the end, I decided to stay with Bolton. I enjoyed my season at the Reebok Stadium and the fans look to me in a way that I couldn't believe."

Bolton, who play Palace this afternoon, have retained the services of their manager, Colin Todd, but Barnsey, with Danny Wilson joining Sheffield Wednesday, have thrust John Hendrie, the striker, into an unfamiliar spotlight. Having played under 13 managers in his career, he should at least have gleaned some expertise along the way.

"I look back and I would say I've learnt something off every one of them," he said. "If I hadn't, then I don't think I would have been given this opportunity. There are lots of little things that will help me through but I think the biggest is that you've got to look ahead and be positive."

Macclesfield Town begin life in the second division today, after successive promotions from the Vauxhall Conference and third division, and are already making plans to leave their Moss Rose ground. Discussions have been held between local council officials and developers to move to a site nearby.

"People are still blinking in disbelief here," Sammy McIlroy, the Macclesfield manager, said. "The fans remember the Northern Premier League days not so long ago and now look where we are. If we stay in this division, calls for a new ground will increase. If we do well, it will be the priority for the following season." His side kicks off against Fulham at home.

In the third division, Scarborough against Southend United hardly looks the most attractive of fixtures. However, for Mark Warren it represents the start of his refereeing career in the Nationwide League. Warren, 38, a policeman from Great Wyrley, near Walsall, has been an assistant referee with the Football League, Premiership and EFL's sports world governing body.

His last match on the line was the World Cup final between Brazil and France in Paris last month. "It was a tremendous once-in-a-lifetime experience," he said. "I thought to myself afterwards: You can't beat this. Where do I go from here?" To the McCain Stadium, of course.

Sunderland forget their Gray day

George Caulkin on how Peter Reid's side have managed to put Wembley defeat behind them

Back in the deep mists of time, before Paul Ince had glared at the ball, wiped the sweat from his nose and bobbed back to the centre circle, before David Batty had cast a mournful glance into the St-Etienne night, there had been another equally salient, equally painful attempt at shovelling a lump of stitched leather towards a large, rectangular target only 12 yards distant.

Michael Gray's turf-scuffing, gut-wrenching excuse of a shot, the first of the summer epidemic otherwise known as the penalty kick, may have been suppressed in the average English memory bank by a certain World Cup defeat at Argentine hands, but not, you can count on it, by many of the near-90,000 crowd who were shoe-horned into Wembley last May to witness it.

Eighty thousand, comfortably the highest attendance for a play-off final that for sheer, naked drama both endorses and condemns such an artificial means of ending a season. Sunderland and Charlton Athletic, third and fourth in the Nationwide League first division, exchange eight goals and 12 penalties before a routine save for Sasa Ilic renders academic ten months' toil. Gray slips to his knees, Ilic contemplates life in the FA Carling Premiership and Sunderland supporters realise that what should be their birthright has passed by once more.

Today, a summer as depressed as local ship builders, the club cranks up once more for Peter Reid and his team. A few players have come in, a few have gone out, but there is the enthusiasm, the passion, the dream? After the Wembley debacle, wouldn't the club be forgiven for treading the well-worn path of other so-called sleeping giants towards oblivion? Once, perhaps, but no longer.

I am very close to committing myself here for the rest of my career," a decidedly cheerful Niall Quinn said yesterday. "That tells you what I think about this place. My wife and family are as happy as they've ever been; happier, in fact. We thought life was good in Manchester, but it's better here. People tell me to remember Bosman, let my contract run out and get a load of money, but there's something here that money can't buy. People down south might raise their eyebrows at that, but this is a very special place to be at the moment."

Sorry, didn't quite catch that. Happy? Better? Special? Is this the player who, less than a year ago, after a severe leg injury, was "on the verge of his career"? Why do these feelings prevail so soon after a thunderous, fateful match, the fall-out from which was so traumatic that Quinn, who not only scored twice that day, but converted a penalty, admits: "I couldn't think straight. I didn't sleep for nights, just stared at the ceiling, wondering? How could that happen, that hurt, not to be transmitted onto the field of play this season?"



Quinn is relishing the prospect of another season at the Stadium of Light. Photograph: Richard Rayner.

"The reaction here when I reported back for pre-season training was phenomenal," Quinn, 31, said, perched inside a creaky prehab at Sunderland's Charlie Hurley training ground.

"The club reckon close to 30,000 season tickets could have been sold by tomorrow's game and that's a great tribute to the people in this area."

ment and little wonder. In October last year, a snapped cruciate ligament had refused to heal and, after an abortive comeback, Quinn suspected the worst. "I'd spoken to Gordon Taylor of the FFA [Professional Footballers' Association] and he'd sent me the forms to sign to quit as a player."

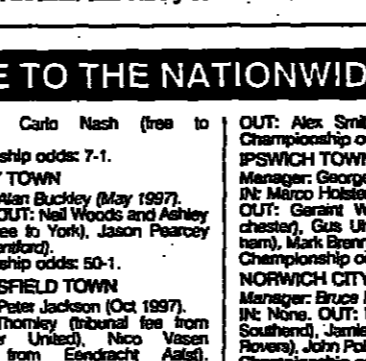
He sought another opinion, one for, despite some pessimistic noises, there has been no mass exodus of talent from the Stadium of Light. Gray is still around, Kevin Phillips should add to his 26 goals of last year, Lee Clark will prove the midfield and Paul Sturges signed from Bury for a million, promises to stiffen a muscle-free defence.

At 31, odds the horse-owning Quinn describes as "skinny but justified," Sunderland are serious favourites to be promoted as champions.

The club is gearing itself for the very top. This season is about unfinished business, but it's only the first chapter. We are thinking big

that they've been able to pick themselves up after Wembley. It's been a great lift to the players; there's been a real buzz around the place. We're up for it this time."

The Ireland centre forward, formerly of Manchester City and Arsenal, can barely contain his excitement and little wonder. In October last year, a snapped cruciate ligament had refused to heal and, after an abortive comeback, Quinn suspected the worst. "I'd spoken to Gordon Taylor of the FFA [Professional Footballers' Association] and he'd sent me the forms to sign to quit as a player."



McCall: back at Bradford

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Birmingham deny Brady's departure

BIRMINGHAM City, the Nationwide League first division club, have denied reports that Karren Brady, their managing director, is leaving St Andrew's to join Fulham (Russell Kempson writes). Paul Peschisolidi, Brady's husband, plays for Fulham in the second division.

In a statement, Birmingham said: "Karren has a three-year contract with the club, is extremely happy and under no circumstances is she leaving." Birmingham open their season against Port Vale at Vale Park this afternoon.

Fulham have signed Dirk Lehmann, 27, from Cottbus, the German side, for £30,000. He is eligible to play against Macclesfield Town today, alongside his fellow summer recruits, John Salako, Kit Symons and Gus Ulenbeek. Oldham Athletic have received a £20,000 fine, suspended for one season, after being found guilty by the Football Association of having a poor disciplinary record last season. Darlington, the third division club, have been fined £10,000, also suspended, for the same reason.

Everton and Leeds United have been handed £50,000 fines, also suspended. They will escape punishment if their records improve in the FA Carling Premiership this season.

Plymouth Argyle have completed the signing of Shaun McCarthy, the Oldham striker, for a nominal fee. McCarthy, 30, is available to play in the opening game against Rochdale after agreeing a three-year deal. It will be his second spell at Plymouth for whom he previously scored 26 goals in 81 appearances before joining Bradford City for £250,000. "I still had a year of my contract to run at Oldham but, after five years there, I thought I needed a change," he said. Bradford, the first-division club, have made their first £1 million signing by capturing Lee Mills from Port Vale.

CLUB-BY-CLUB GUIDE TO THE NATIONWIDE LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION

FORTHCOMING COMPANY GOLF DAYS. The companies listed here registered their golf days for the 1998 Challenge. The top 100 individual scores at the day will form the company team eligible to qualify for a regional final.

BARNSLEY Manager: John Hendrie (July 1998). IN: Robin van der Laan (£225,000 from Derby), Kevin Richardson (£200,000 from Southampton). OUT: Neil Redmond (£1.1m to Charlton), Luke Beckett (free to Chester), Paul Heritage (free to Colchester). Championship odds: 12-1.

BIRMINGHAM CITY Manager: Trevor Francis (May 1998). IN: Nono, Steve Bruce (free to Sheffield United as player-manager). Championship odds: 9-1.

BOLTON WANDERERS Manager: Colin Todd (Jan 1998). IN: Bob Taylor (free from WBA), Ricardo Gardner (£1m from Harbour View), Ousmane Janssen (£1.9m from Lyngby), Eduard Gudjonsson (free from PSV Eindhoven). OUT: Alan Thompson (£4.5m to Aston Villa), Gerry Taggart (free to Leicester), Chris Fairclough (free to Notts County), Mark Westhead (free to Wycombe), Stuart Whitehead (free to Carlisle). Championship odds: 12-1.

BRISTOL CITY Manager: John Ward (March 1997). IN: Adeb Alarabi (£1.2m from Gillingham), Tony Thorpe (£1m from Fulham), Soren Anderson (£100,000 from Aalborg), Carl Hutchings (£130,000 from Bradford), Matthew Stowell (£15,000 from Slough), Julian Watts (free from Leicester City). OUT: Dominic Barclay (free to Colchester), Steve Gray (free to Carlisle), Gary Oates (undisclosed fee to Notts County). Championship odds: 20-1.

BURY Manager: Neil Warnock (June 1998). IN: Dean Barker (free from Preston), Andy Preece (free from Blackpool), Steve Redmond (free from Oldham). OUT: Paul Butler (£500,000 to Sunderland), Bryan Smith (free to Stoke). Championship odds: 50-1.

CREWE ALEXANDRA Manager: Doro Graef (June 1998). IN: Matthew Wade (£100,000 from Arsenal), Rodney Jack (£250,000 from Torquay). OUT: Acazola Barkale (£50,000 to GPR), France Tierney (free to Middlesbrough), Robert Gray (free to Blackpool), Neil Custer (free to Chester), Gareth Whitley (£300,000 to Bradford), Ashley Westwood (£150,000 to Bradford). Championship odds: 40-1.

CRYSTAL PALACE Manager: Terry Venables (June 1998). IN: David Amerson (free from Brierley), Januszewski, Dean Austin (free from Tottenham), Pablo Rodriguez and Cristian Luciani (£2m combined from Argentina), James, Sam Gil and Fan Zhi (£1m combined from Shrewsbury, Charlton). OUT: Dean Gordon (£300,000 from Manchester City), John McQuade (free from Hamilton), Paul

CYCLING: SHAMED TEAM CARRY ON AS UCI CONFRONTS DOPING PROBLEMS

THE Festina cycling team, shamed by doping revelations during the Tour de France, make their return to top-flight international competition today in the San Sebastian Classic, the sixth round in the 1998 International Cycling Union (UCI) World Cup series.

Five of the nine Festina riders interviewed and held in custody by police during the Tour are expected to start the Spanish race, including the former world time-trial champion, Alex Zülle, of Switzerland, and Laurent Brochard, of France, the world road-race champion.

Both Zülle and Brochard have confessed to using the banned red blood cell booster, erythropoietin (EPO), and are waiting to see what, if any, sanctions will be meted out to them by the UCI, cycling's governing body, after their widely publicised admissions.

Meanwhile, in Spain, out-pace riders by French police investigators during the Tour continues to dominate sporting headlines.

In response to the police raids that overshadowed the Tour, organisers of the Tour of Spain in September have announced that they are likely to forgo a planned race route through the French Pyrenees, for fear of further action by the French authorities.

Festina return for Spanish race

By JEREMY WHITTLE

Professional cycling's congested calendar. Meanwhile, in Spain, out-pace riders by French police investigators during the Tour continues to dominate sporting headlines.

ROWING Coxed pair eye medal

ALEX PARTRIDGE and Rudi Baxter-Warman, of Great Britain, dominated the second semi-final of the coxed pairs at the world junior championships at Ottersheim, Austria, yesterday. Steered by Adam Mossat, cox of the British eight that last year won bronze, they averaged 36 strokes a minute to finish ahead of Italy and Slovenia. A medal looks a strong probability in the final today.

Francis Houghton and Debbie Flood have been improving with every race and qualified comfortably in second place in the double sculls. James Di Lizio, however, could not repeat the good start that he had in his repêchage of the single sculls.

Select team advertisement with a large image of a person and text.

Last condition look perfect for Risque Lat

Exposed! The true story of Pony Club

The mission: infiltrate one of the most feared societies in Britain

This week, it is this column's proud boast to have penetrated the most hated organisation in the country. Not the British Fascists or the InterCity Firm or the Hell's Angels or the Masons: no, I have set my sights much higher.

Cunningly disguised in a flat cap and stout boots, I moved among the members without attracting attention, listening to the secrets, playing a double role, prepared always to pass these secrets on. And it worked. I have got to the heart of the organisation that attracts more fear and loathing than any other.

Yes, I have penetrated the Pony Club. To be precise, the Waveney Harriers Pony Club Camp (junior section). There I passed unrecognised among 60 ponies, 59 small girls and one small boy, and a raft of instructors and volunteers.

You will admire my courage, I know, because this does, indeed, sound like a truly frightening prospect. But I was up to it. Soon I found myself at the bareback jumping class, taking on the essential task of catching ponies and helping girls with wobbly lower lips back onto their ponies.

Actually, the first time I did, it was near disaster. I am more used to legging people up onto racehorses. The first fallen girl I gallantly assisted nearly got thrown clean over the top of her little pony. She saved herself with a frantic grab at the mane and myself, I apologise, professed to get her, range right next time.

Ferribly brave, all these little girls. Bareback jumping makes falls inevitable, some of them outright comic, with the



SIMON BARNES Talking horse

faller giggling when picked up, and some of them quite nasty. Plenty of tears. "Deep breaths now." And then back on again and take the jump again. "Hurray, hurra! Well done, Anne!"

And it is all innocent and hilarious and touching, but I know that the hackles of my readers are rising. And so I must go on and tell you that the Pony Club children are not all well-to-do, and they are not all spoilt brats with gobfists of silver spoons.

And of course you won't believe me, but I must at least go through the motions. Walk through the car park, where the parental cars were all parked (parents do a lot of helping, it's that kind of organisation). And yes, there were plenty of shiny new four-wheel drives, many of which will never go off road.



Club mix: Waveney Harriers compare notes as, right, Emily Roskains, 11, enjoys a joke in the stables. Photographs: Peter Davies/McLellan

But there were also many ancient vehicles held together by such things as rust and habit, and some of the rust looked pretty weary. All right, you say: but it costs a lot of money to buy a pony, so cars or no cars, all the parents must be rich and therefore all the kids spoilt. All 60 of them.

But in a community, especially a rural one, horses have a way of circling around. Ponies are beloved and often very long-lived. So they are outgrown and passed on: as gifts, as long loans. There were some ponies in their twenties, who had done a dozen or more pony club camps, some of them with Disneyland Parties.

Tack and riding clothes also go round and round. You can keep a pony on do-it-yourself livery (that is to say, you do all the work) for as little as £10 a

week. Which is not nothing: but life is all about priorities, and for some families, the pony is the thing you make your sacrifices for. Note: it is not ponies that spoil children but parents. A spilt parent is perfectly capable of spoiling a child without going near a horse.

Pony Club Camp is an annual summer-school holiday tradition: five days of endless instruction and riding and competition and caring for the beast. It costs £90 for five days, including all the food for rider and pony. It works out at less than a quiet hour. How does that compare with Disneyland Parties?

There were, indeed, some well-off kids with their own rather expensive ponies, and some of them, but by no means all, were rather good at riding them. There were the

tenner-a-week kids with their beloved hand-me-down veterans, some of whom were absolute mustards. And there were also a lot of children on borrowed ponies: a horse of their own for a whole five days and, in many cases, for the first time.

Four in this situation had never in their lives ridden outside a single small oblong of sand in the middle of Norfolk. Hacking out into the country, and then, gloriously, charging round a cross-country course — oh, brave new world that has such horses in it.

Observe the children at the start of the cross-country course: preparing for the mad scurry beneath the massive ancient oaks of Sotterley Park, over a series of hard, unforgiving obstacles. Terror is a poor word for what some of these

children feel. Observe the faces before their turn comes up: don't bother with the blindfold and the last cigarette, let's just get it over and done with.

Observe the water-melon grins afterwards, the self-delight, the discovery of undreamt-of courage, the gratitude to the merry beast beneath who had given them such joy. This is not a small lesson to learn.

And there are plenty of other lessons, too. The pony is looked after by the child. For many, this is the first time they have ever had so much responsibility — for anything. Naturally, everything they do is checked, but they have to do it and get it right. It is a way of learning the responsibilities of love: a way of learning that love is not a straightforward business, and one that you do

not ever get on your own terms. Pony Club camp is, all in all, a long lesson about the nature of love. Love requires courage, it requires responsibility, it requires forgiveness. Horses teach you these things: and in the five days of the camp, these large matters are ineluctable.

The Pony Club has recently become a charity, which gives it serious responsibilities far beyond the entertainment of privileged children. It is also the largest youth movement in the country after the scouts; it has 120,000 members in 15 countries. And it is changing from the ancient traditions of elitism to an organisation committed to the notion of Horses for All.

Horses are for some people who care for them, a vector for learning — learning about life,



The first fallen girl I gallantly assisted nearly got thrown over the top of her little pony. She saved herself

about love, about other skills. I have known children with learning difficulties grow into skilful and responsible people through their liking for, their ability with, horses. Horses are also often the route by which dyslexic and dyspraxic children find themselves. Horses are for some people a phase in the growing-up process. For others, they become part of a way of life. For rich or poor, horses become one of life's priorities.

By one of those odd coincidences, the treaded mobile phone rang out from my pocket as I walked past the bending poles towards the field where they were judging tack and turn-out. (And did you do all the plaiting yourself?) I was a message from Sheikh Mohammed, in response to something I had written about the victory of his excellent horse, Swain, in the King George at Ascot the other week, one of the richest races in Europe. Part of the message was that the reason he seemed less than effervescent in victory was because he had the previous day taken part in a 100-mile endurance race. Just another person who loves horses not wisely but too well. And there I was in a middle of a muddy field surrounded by 60 more of them. As a result of my infiltration, I can report the secret at the heart of the Pony Club. It is joy.

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Ascot: Going good to firm. 2.30 (5) DOUBLE OSCAR (Alec Groves, 8-1) (10) ... 3.25 (1m) 1. RISHMAN (P 14m, 100-30) ...

Salisbury: Going good to firm. 2.20 (1m) 1. A TOUCH OF FROST (D Sweeney, 8-1) ... 3.25 (1m) 1. KHALAS (D Smith, 11-1) ...

Wolverhampton: Going standard. 2.10 (5) 1. Solonin (A McCarty, 4-1) ... 3.45 (1m 100yd) 1. Pass The Heat (D Hind, 5-1) ...

Pharmacist is best prescription

The first European group one race of the season for two-year olds, the £150,000-added Heinz 57 Phoenix Stakes at Leopardstown tomorrow, has four British raiders, led by Neville Callaghan's Prix Robert Pappin winner, Black Amber.

THUNDERER: 2.05 Blue Melody, 2.35 Lord High Admiral, 3.10 Benvenutus

3.45 CORAL HANDICAP (£14,550: 5) (19 runners): 1 (6) 000000 PROUD NATIVE (D F, 8-1) ...

Smith given two-day suspension

THE apprentice, J. D. Smith, was again in trouble with the stewards after landing the Cheviot Classified Stakes on Khalas at Salisbury yesterday. Smith, given a ten-day ban under the "non-trainers" rule at Kempton earlier this week, received a further two-day suspension, this time for trying too hard.

REDCAR

THUNDERER: 2.50 Shoket Term, 2.50 Gypsy Music, 3.25 Salfan, 3.55 Good Hand, 4.30 Lines-C, 5.05 Middle East

3.55 MARY REVELLY GRACE CLUB CLAIMING STAKES (£2,553: 1m 61 1/2) (4)

1 (6) 0000 PETERSON (P 5) (P 5) 5-9-10 ... 2 (6) 0000 SHERIDAN (P 5) (P 5) 5-9-10 ...

2.35 TROMIC SHAVUVE CLAIMING STAKES (£2,318: 6) (12 runners)

1 (6) 123000 MONT OF GLASS (D F, 8-1) ... 2 (6) 121510 SILK ST JOHN (P 5) (P 5) 5-9-10 ...

4.20 PETROS ROSE OF LANCASTER STAKES (Group II: £19,000: 1m 2 1/2) (8 runners)

1 (6) 00000 WINTER RENAISSANCE (P 5) (P 5) ... 2 (6) 00000 PRINCE OF BEAN (P 5) (P 5) ...

2.50 ARCHBISHOPS BUILDERS MERCHANTS RED CROSS SELLING STAKES (2-Y-O: £2,500: 6) (19)

1 (6) 0000 BARRAGE STREET (P 5) (P 5) ... 2 (6) 0000 GREY STROKE (P 5) (P 5) ...

5.05 GO RACING IN YORKSHIRE HANDICAP (£2,250: 6) (26)

1 (6) 0000 DANIELLE (P 5) (P 5) ... 2 (6) 0000 WILLIAM'S WELLS (P 5) (P 5) ...

3.10 HARVEY JONES HANDICAP (£5,234: 1m 30yd) (15 runners)

1 (12) 120000 MONT OF GLASS (D F, 8-1) ... 2 (12) 121510 SILK ST JOHN (P 5) (P 5) ...

4.50 MTS GROUP HANDICAP (£3,647: 1m 60) (8 runners)

1 (6) 0000 FORDS (P 5) (P 5) ... 2 (6) 0000 BALMAIN (P 5) (P 5) ...

3.25 ROTHMANS ROYALS NORTH SOUTH CHALLENGE SERIES (Handicap: £4,533: 1m) (13)

1 (6) 0000 WILD GRY (P 5) (P 5) ... 2 (6) 0000 SAINT PROSPER (P 5) (P 5) ...

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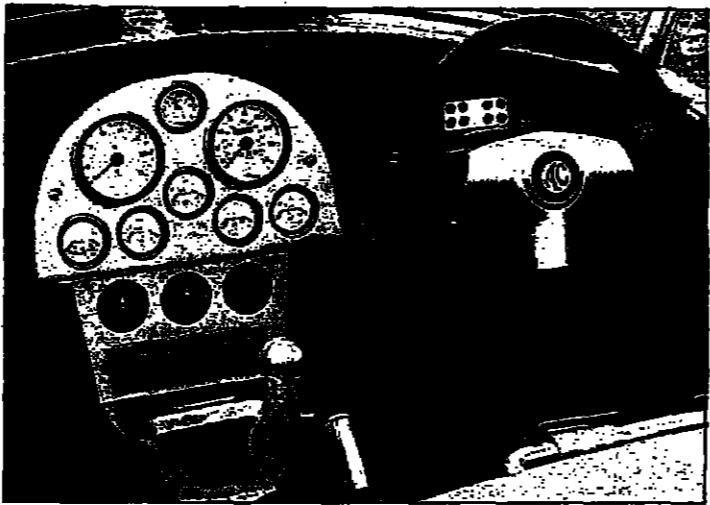
Ian Adcock drives the Superblower AC — successor to the Cobra — along the leafy lanes of the Cotswolds

What better combination could there be than a midsummer's evening treasure hunt in the Cotswolds and a classic British sports car? All those honey-glowed cottages festooned with roses, honeysuckle and wisteria nesting in villages with names that no tourist can get their tongue round: Temple Guiting, Guiting Powers, The Swells, The Slaughters. In all, an evening that would have sent a shiver of pure pleasure down Toad's spine — and mine as I pointed the silver and burgundy AC Superblower westwards.

But the AC Superblower doesn't come high on the list of suitable cars for a Cotswolds treasure hunt. For a start it's marginally over-powered for the average English country lane, with some 355bhp on tap thanks to a supercharged 5-litre V8 built by Ford specially for AC. Enough, says AC, to dispatch zero to 60 in 4.2 seconds and continue on to (an optimistic to my mind) 165mph maximum.



Driving position and pedals, unfortunately, are not ideal



The interior is neater, with period black-on-cream instruments

still had a great body. All it needed was some tender loving care and a heart transplant.

South African entrepreneur Alan Lubinsky has provided the TLC — le money, and Uncle Henry the heart transplant in the form of the aforesaid supercharged V8. Supercharging has given the Superblower huge slugs of overtaking torque (385 lbs ft at 3750rpm).

From almost walking pace, irrespective of which gear the car is in or how many revs the engine is

turning over, just bury your right foot and to the accompaniment of the supercharger's shrill whistle

To the sound of a shrill whistle you thunder past slower traffic

you thunder past slower traffic. This proved a boon around the Cotswolds as using the gearbox is like stirring setting cement.

As for the driving position, it is obviously designed by someone



The Superblower is a big improvement on the Cobra, with supercharging that has given it huge slugs of overtaking torque

who has mixed up pages of the *Kama Sutra* with a beginner's guide to yoga: the steering wheel is

too close and fouls your knees, the pedals are impossible to heel and toe with and the gearlever swan necks forward.

The interior is neater than it was, with period Smith's black-on-cream instruments binned in the centre of the fascia. It's just a pity that the proprietary Ford parts — door pulls, switches, stalks etc — aren't better disguised. This is, after all, a hand-

built car costing just a fiver short of £67,800.

While the hand-beaten aluminium body shell and braced twin-tube chassis remains unaltered, the all-wishbone suspension now has anti-roll bars front and rear for the first time. Except for over the roughest Cotswolds lanes, which would catch any car out, this has smoothed out the ride and also given the Superblower huge grip through corners.

Even in the wet the bass drum-sized Cooper Cobra tyres stay firmly planted to the tarmac, but I suspect when they let go it's faster than

a spin doctor's denial. Wet weather isn't what the Superblower was designed for.

Erecting the rudimentary hood is like trying to put up a deckchair in a gale and while it remained wind and water-proof, the windows fog up like a steam bath and make it impossible to see any signs or clues that might have assisted us in coming not quite last in the treasure hunt.

That balmy summer evening never arrived. The entire hunt was spent with the hood up and the trio of wipers clack-clacking across the screen. Come the half-way stage,

right clouds and summer fog cloaked the Cotswolds in dank drizzle. Even the locals were getting lost so there was no hope for us in the Superblower.

Of course, the next day dawned clear and bright. The Superblower's hood came down and stayed furred all day and then I understood why people buy cars like this. In an age when so many cars are sanitised, the Superblower is all about the senses and emotions.

It doesn't pretend to be anything but a raw sports car from the old school, built for pure enjoyment — and that's good enough for me.

Workhorse and road racer — the best of both worlds

Can the scooter king really make a serious Superbike? Alan Cathcart rides Aprilia's new RSV1000

Italy's Aprilia stands at the leading edge of the scooter revolution sweeping Europe, producing more than 400,000 two-wheelers a year in its factories north of Venice.

But only a few of these are motorcycles and none are larger than 650cc. Yet the company, owned by the Beaggio family, is the only European firm able to inflict on-going defeat on the likes of Honda and Yamaha in two-stroke Grand Prix racing. It dominates the 250cc class, is leading the 125cc world championship and has won six world titles in the past five years.

But Aprilia is poised to take a giant step into motorcycling's Premier League with the launch of the RSV1000 V-twin Superbike — its first multi-cylinder four-stroke and the first of the extensive range of bigger-engined bikes with

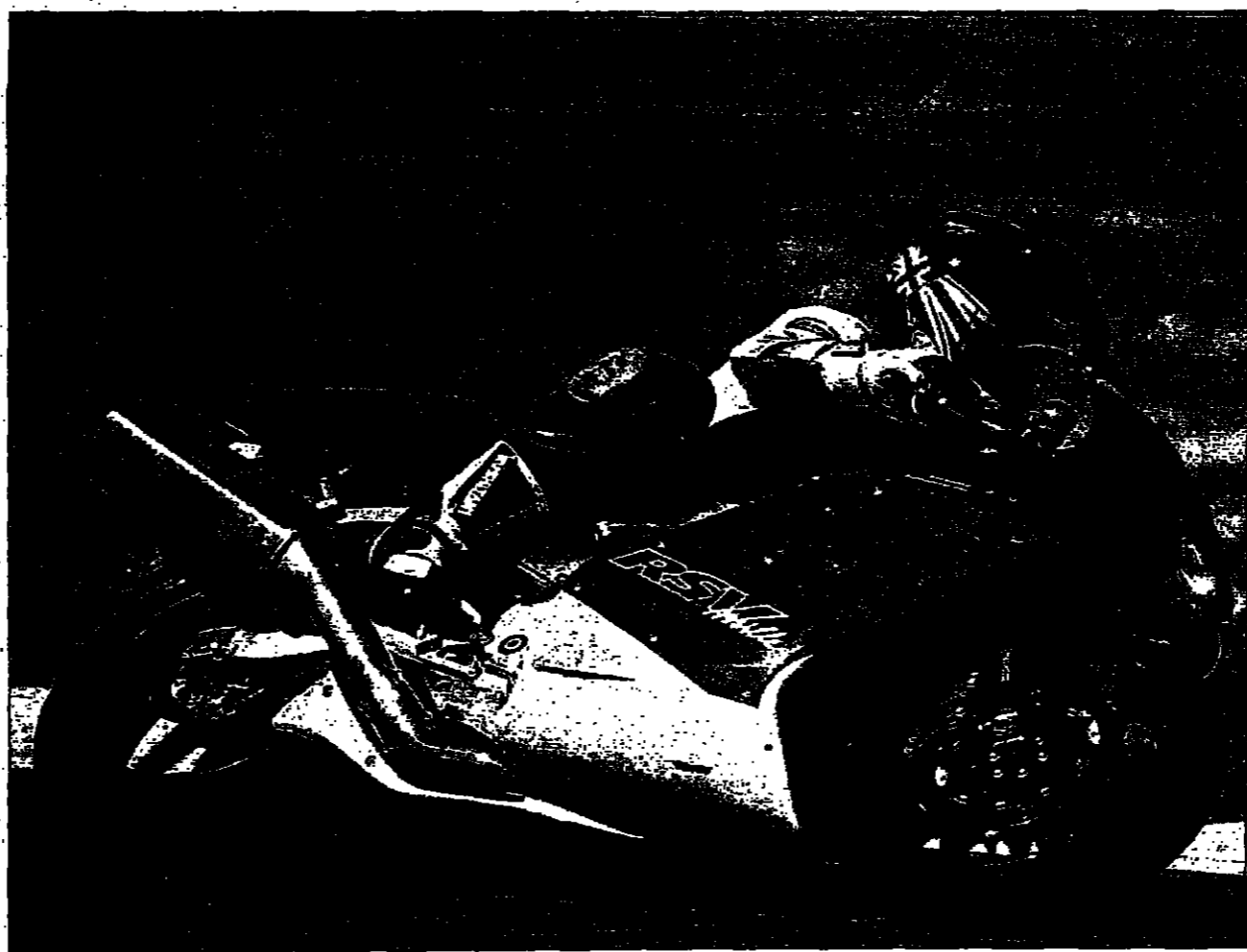
which it plans to become a force in world biking.

Riding the *Mille*, as the RSV1000 is already known, is so satisfying that it is hard to believe Aprilia has not been making bikes like this for some time. It stands out from its rivals by meeting the practical demands of street-riding sportbikers without compromising performance on the race track.

No other contestant in the Superbike class combines the best of both worlds so well. It is a mark of Aprilia's achievement that they have managed to deliver a bike that you could consider riding to work, yet

can be turned into a devastatingly effective performer on the race track.

Arguably, the *Mille* is the finest all-round sportbike on the market. It is evidently well-made and is very well priced at £9,699 on the road,

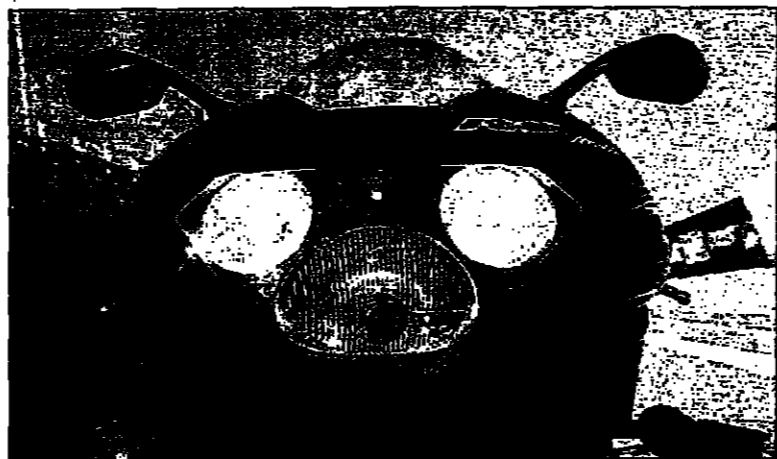


compared with its equivalent, the Ducati 916 Biposto, which costs £11,750.

Sitting aboard the RSV1000 underlines how suitable it is for taller riders. This is an Italian bike built for northern Europeans, with a comfortable riding position and bodywork that delivers adequate protection at high speed.

Thumb the starter, crank the fuel-injected, eight-valve motor and listen to its distinctive engine note, higher-pitched than a Ducati because the engine is a narrower-angled, 60-degree V-twin, against its Desmo rival's 90 degrees. Aprilia engineers chose this to make the engine more compact and thus improve the *Mille's* handling because of the shorter wheelbase, better weight distribution and longer swingarm.

The way the *Mille* steers into a curve convinces you



they were right. Any extra vibration from the 60-degree motor is taken care of by in-built balance shafts, one geared to the crank, the other in the rear cylinder head.

But now comes the biggest

surprise. Hook it into bottom gear and feel the clutch take up smoothly as you feed it out — with none of the grabbing associated with some other street Superbikes — and discover how the Aprilia combines real-world practicality with race-level allure.

quality suspension package, whose Showa forks and Sachs-Boge rear shock have a wide range of adjustment and provide adequate ride quality within a sportbike context.

The *Mille* is still light and slim enough to make it feel as if you're riding a twin and, at 189kg dry, it is the lightest of the new-generation V-twins in fully-faired form.

The many gadgets give added value, such as a lap timer, an LCD info-center which variably monitors speed, mileage, water temperature and battery condition, a clock and a trip computer. Styling is individual rather than drop-dead gorgeous, but is in keeping with Aprilia's house style.

Make no mistake, the long-awaited introduction of the RSV1000 is a significant step for the Aprilia marque.

Fifty days and fifty countries

Epic journey will mark golden anniversary of Land Rover



Journey of discovery: the Land Rovers and volunteers

LAND Rover is mounting one of the most ambitious motoring expeditions ever this week — taking four Land Rovers 20,000 miles from Norway to South Africa to celebrate 50 years of the vehicle and to help to raise money for Unicef. The aim is to visit 50 countries in 50 days and the trip is sponsored by *The Times*.

The Land Rover/*Times* team is made up of 30 volunteers who trained for 18 months in anticipation of August 1, when they left Rover's factory gates in Solihull. They hope to drive into Cape Town in just over six weeks' time. They will leave in stages, forming four groups.

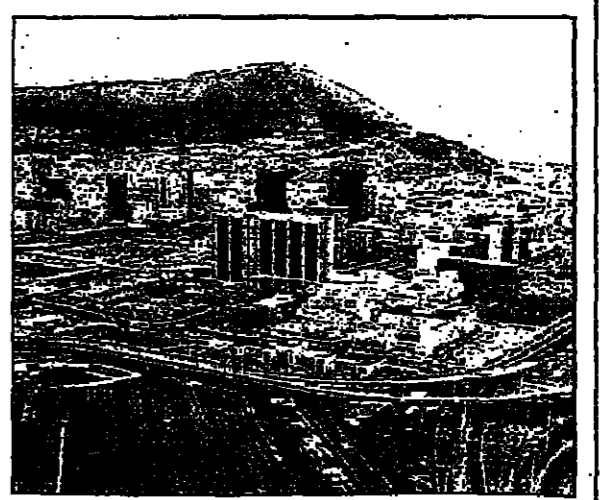
The epic drive will take them from the northern beauty of Norway, through

the searing heat of Saudi Arabia to the plains of southern Africa. They will visit Unicef projects along the way.

Rover spokesman Bernard Carey says: "Although it is a voluntary initiative from within the company, I am confident that their professional approach to the task will see them make their target of 50 countries in 50 days."

A less formal spokesman added that there would be a big beach party in Cape Town when the volunteers arrive. "Local Land Rover owners will be invited and it'll be the end of a great achievement."

Times journalist Mac McDiarmid is travelling with the group and will report on the drive in *Weekend in Sport*.



The team hope to reach Cape Town in six weeks

AUTOFAX by David Long and Les Lewis

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Subsidised cab drivers would not only solve the transport crisis with their wealth of opinions but also could be advisers on Government policy

Hail the saviours of our highways

I can find no mention of London taxi drivers in any of the documents relating to John Prescott's integrated transport strategy, which is a sad and disturbing omission. And not just London taxi drivers. Black cabs, driven by men who have evolved to the point where their heads can swivel through 360 degrees, now provide cities from Plymouth to Glasgow. The flaw in the plans for road pricing, subsidised buses and the like is that they deal with a physical problem, the presence of too many cars on the road. But the problem is not physical. It is psychological. The car has become a home from home, a mobile office, a status symbol, a sex symbol. John Prescott is the embodiment of this: his official car is a Jaguar and so is his private car. Millions of commuters now

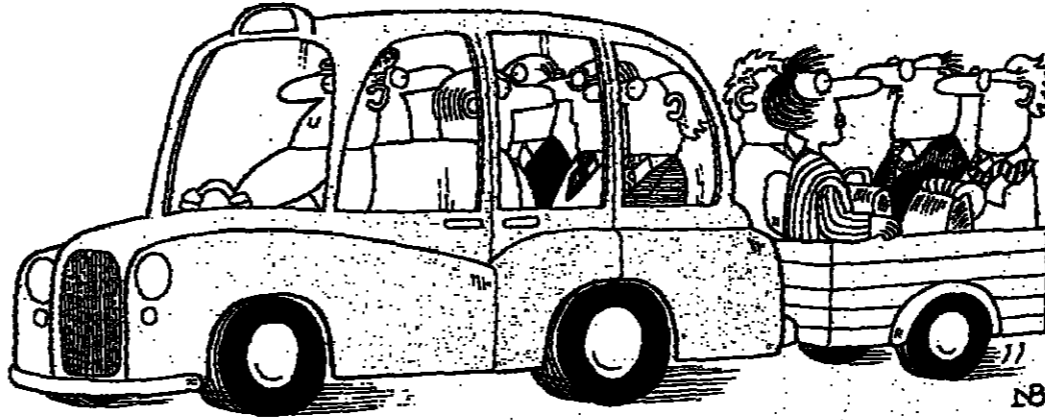
DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

spend more time in their cars each day than they do in their beds. No one would dream of asking them to exchange their sprung mattresses for some uncomfortable, smelly and unreliable item, yet this is precisely what we are being asked to do in relation to transport: exchange the car for a bus or a train.

But what if the car driver, swearing in jams twice a day, was to be asked to exchange one status symbol (his own car) for another (a chauffeur-driven car)? Most cars travelling to work now contain one person, the driver. The size of black cabs would enable them to carry at least four, thus bringing a huge reduction in the number of vehicles on the road. Our city streets would be transformed, even allowing for a necessary increase in the number of cabs. If this sounds too radical, consider a distant example. I worked for a few years in Singapore in the early 1980s and one of the first people I met there advised me against accepting a company car. "I've got 15,000 cars out there" he told me. "Cheap, fast and I don't have to put oil in them." That is a lot of taxis in a place the size of the Isle of Wight but the government



subsidy made taxis the cheapest way to get around. Given that Britain now subsidises the railways to the tune of £2 billion a year, twice what taxpayers handed over when they owned the trains, and given that a subsidy will have to be paid to privatised bus companies to reinstate loss-making services, there is no reason why some of that cash

should not be handed to taxi firms; thus enabling the car owner to fulfil his dearest wish: travelling to work by car. Integrated transport? What could be more integrated than a system whose drivers would be roving consultants to almost every department of state: transport ("They oughter make this one-way, gov, bin saying that for years"), health ("Oil You need yer eyes testing"), education ("You should see my daughter's school report, bleedin' teachers can't even spell"), the Treasury ("Took a geezer to the Bank of England this mornin', told 'im he oughter cut these interest wossanarzes"), culture, media and sport ("I see from the Stannard that Michael Owen gets more money than Peavartot,

marvellous innit?"), and of course the traditional cabbie's consultancy role in formulating criminal justice policies for the Home Office ("Hangin's too good for 'em"). I can see no reason why these Wittensteins of the highway should not now come into their own as principal purveyors of travel in the city. The argument that persuading people to travel in groups to and from work would be a nightmare of organisation is rendered silly by the fact that tens of thousands of ordinary people have been organising school runs for years without problems. And we can easily invert the traffic priorities on our roads so that instead of bus and taxi lanes being an afterthought, they would now dominate. Where three lanes are available, two of them would be given over to taxis and buses on the condition that bus companies were obliged to employ conductors: a major cause of delays is the fact that buses are stopped for ages while the driver takes fares. Which only leaves the small matters of persuading cab drivers to wear a cap and ensuring that they show the proper respect due from a chauffeur. The latter is not a problem for me: London cabbies can recognise breeding, so they always call me squire.

When Angela Kilmartin was told her car wasn't worth fixing she took on her insurers. She tells Tony Dawe how she won

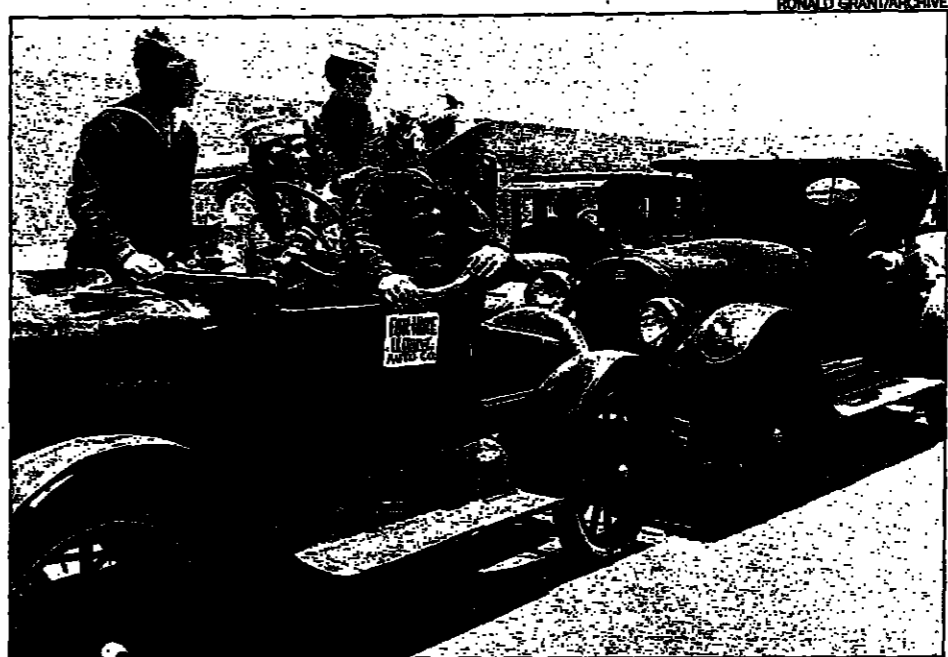
Escaping from the write-off trap

While thousands of motorists are showing off their new S-registration cars, hundreds of less well-off drivers are becoming victims of the so-called "write-off trap". Their treasured old cars have suffered minor damage but their insurance companies have decided they are not worth repairing. The compensation on offer, however, is far too small to pay for a comparable replacement. But there is an alternative, as Angela Kilmartin, an inveterate campaigner from North London, discovered. Horrified at the thought of paying several thousand pounds to replace her E-registration Vauxhall Astra, written off after vandals



Angela Kilmartin, who won her battle against the insurers

shashed all the wiring when they failed to hot-wire the car, she claimed her vehicle back from the insurers. Mrs Kilmartin, who runs the dental campaign Patients Against Mercury Amalgam, says: "I took it to my local garage in Hackney which said it would cost about £450 to repair." But she had chosen direct insurance with Help, part of the Manchester-based AGF group. The company wanted the Astra inspected by one of its approved garages in Tottenham, which reported it would cost £700 to repair and so declared it a write-off. "When I asked for the car back, I was told it had already been sent to a breaker's yard 50 miles away," Mrs Kilmartin says. "So I rang the breakers who said the tax disc had been sold even though I had not received or accepted any offer from the insurers. The insurance company finally offered me £1,400 for a write-off or £900 if I took the car back. My own garage got it back on the road for £350. I ended up in pocket and with a reliable car." Paul Chaplain, head of personal lines at AGF, says:



Drivers whose cars have suffered minor damage are often left with a no-win situation

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go

Using the scooter halved my usual journey time



The Zappy Power Board is made in California and costs £595. For that price you get a heavyweight machine that is easier to ride than to carry

Is it a bike? A skateboard? A game? No, it's Scootman

John Naish finds he is the envy of other road users as he tries out a zippy new way to travel to work

For a week there, I was Scootman — striving to make the world a softer, more environmentally friendly place by trundling through congested traffic to rescue drivers' sense of humour from the grinding jaws of road rage.

Scootman is fun, silent and zippy, liberated from the pedestrianism of life by his electrically powered scooter. While Superman's greatest fear is a carelessly discarded chunk of green Kryptonite, Scootman's dreams are haunted by the rule-obsessed minions in traffic supremo John Prescott's transport department, for whom enjoyable zippiness may prove anathema.

The Zappy Power Board, Scootman's steed, comes winging over from wacky California, courtesy of the Zap organisation (which stands for Zero Atmospheric Pollution), a bunch who probably wear sandals, read subversive comics and swap Grateful Dead albums. Their mission in life is

to popularise battery-powered transport as practical, clean fun.

The device itself bears a more-than-coincidental resemblance to a kid's kick-along scooter, but the difference is hidden under the footboard — a battery-driven motor that will power the rider to 13mph for a range of eight miles. The scoot comes with its own separate plug-in transformer, and will charge up fully in about six hours.

Hopping aboard the little machine guarantees an instant grin: it's so thoroughly childlike — and techno-trendy too. Starting it is simple: a quick shove with the foot and a flick of the bendy start lever and you are away, most likely hanging on and making "Whoooooah" sounds if it is your first go.

A little skill is required — as the instructions say: "This vehicle should only be used by persons with the ability and control required for the safe use of a skateboard."



John Naish is in pole position at the traffic lights for the final stretch on his work run

Which put your tester at something of a disadvantage: at my boys' school, you were either a skateboard delinquent, a guitar delinquent or — if you lacked basic co-ordination — a straightforward delinquent. My residual knowledge of Led Zeppelin riffs was never going to help here.

Nevertheless, I only came to grief once — when trying to get

a bit clever after a few miles by jumping a kerbstone. I practised standard crash procedure: lie flat on back, scan furiously for embarrassing witnesses, ride round corner and then check for personal and equipment damage. There was none — it all happened so slowly. The experience taught me to use the back brake.

But is the Zappy scooter of any practicable use? The answer is a qualified yes. My trip to work involves a twice-daily tussle with the vagaries of London's Docklands Light Railway, bracketed by sizeable walks between office and station, and station and home.

Using the scooter to cover the walking distance almost halved the usual 45-minute journey time. And it folds away compactly enough to prevent any jobsworth conductors throwing me off their trains — bicycles, idiotically, are banned from the DLR.

If Prescott were to wave his magic wand and ban cars from the streets, we could all be whistling our happy way to work on these. In the real world, however, riding busy

roads is not for the fainthearted, and certainly never to be done in darkness. In daylight, though, you never need worry about visibility: the amazing travelling one-person scooter circus is guaranteed to monopolise all comers' attention.

Women smile, men shout encouragement, motorcyclists stop and ask about it. Children want one — now. One drawback is the scooter's weight — this baby carries some serious batteries, so lugging it up and down stairs can be something of a bind, even though it folds into a reasonably portable shape. A bit of foot assistance is needed, too, on hills, which the motor finds a strain.

But the thing that really could bring Scootman down to earth is bureaucracy. The Department of Transport warns: "You can't ride it on the pavement."

The DVLA eventually decided it was a powered cycle, and thus needed to be registered — and taxed at £15 a year. Such regulations condemn it to a life as a rich person's toy — a lovely toy, albeit costly at £595, available from Scooters! Ltd. (0171-351 7400).



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46 UNIT TRUST PRICES

THE TIMES SATURDAY AUGUST 8 1998

Main table containing unit trust prices for various funds, organized in columns with headers for fund names and prices.

Advertisement for 'Try a Triathlon for us...' to help sick and disabled children and the homeless. Includes the London Triathlon logo and contact information for Action Search.

Large advertisement for Muncie dog food, featuring a dog's face and the text 'A DOG'S LIFE' and 'You can open your eyes but you can't see the Abbey National'.

A DOG'S LIFE 54

If you do have to travel a bit, a jet is the only way

WEEKEND MONEY

HOLIDAY CASHBACKS 48

Flush with francs? Loaded with lire? The buyback answer

Munch your way to £100,000 pa

Question: "How do you make a small fortune?" The answer, as many a small child will know, is "Start with a big one".

As part of the centenary celebrations in honour of that important institution, the cornflake, or more precisely, "the invention of the flaking process," Kellogg's is running a competition with a prize bonanza of compact-disc players, mountain bikes, holidays and sports cars on offer.

To win one of the prizes, including the big one, it is a matter of finding one of the special printed messages inside a packet of Kellogg's Corn Flakes or Choco Corn Flakes.

However there is one small snag. After the initial £100,000 tax free, the winner will actually receive subsequent payments gross, in other words there will be a sizeable amount of tax to be paid, at a basic or higher rate depending on the individual's tax position.

To offer this big prize, Kellogg's is not simply creaming off the appropriate amount from its annual cornflake profits. Just as thousands of people do with their pensions, Kellogg's will invest in an annuity policy that will pay out what could amount over time to many millions of pounds.

How much this will cost Kellogg's is not yet known, as the size of the annuity will depend on the winner's age.

If the idea of £100,000 (less tax) every year sounds attractive, but you are not keen on cornflakes, how else could you expect to earn that amount annually? Weekend Money consulted some experts in the field as to how it could be done.

Andrew Withey, investment strategy director at James Capel, the private client arm of the banking group, suggested a number of options.

The cheapest option, says Mr Withey, would be to invest about £1.75 million in United Kingdom gilts, where a yield

Kellogg's, the foods group, will put one lucky person on easy street for life.

Clare Stewart counts the cost and Anne Ashworth seeks other ways of doing it

of 5.75 per cent might be expected. Or for those with more money to use up, £3.5 million invested in UK equities with an average yield of 2.75 per cent could be expected to produce £100,000 annual income.

Alternatively, £3 million to £3.5 million in a balanced portfolio of UK and overseas equities and gilts might produce what is required.

Income derived from investment in the United States market would mop up rather more spare cash, estimates Mr Withey, with £8 million invested in the S&P's industrial index likely to generate the £100,000.

All of the options exclude income that would be generated from dividend payments.

While such sums are not necessarily beyond the reach of all of James Capel's private clients, most would not, adds Mr Withey, be necessarily looking to maximise their income but rather be concerned to achieve significant capital growth of the large sums invested.

Alternative routes to the £100,000 birthday gift would require similarly large lump sums. "You could put about £850,000 into something like a with-profit bond, but an annuity is the only way to guarantee a payout of £100,000 every year," says Alastair Conway, an independent financial adviser.

Annuity Direct, the financial adviser that specialises in annuities, calculates that for a man aged 60, a lump sum of £1,421,164.88 would be needed for a net £100,000. For a 30-year-old man, the amount needed would be £2,318,163.70, says Annuity Direct.

If your current account balance is a little short of such figures, there is always the cheaper option of heading off to your local supermarket and bulk-buying Kellogg's Corn Flakes instead.



THE bugle call that brings all the little troopers eagerly around the mess-table is Kellogg's Toasted Corn Flakes.

Advertising agencies have worked hard to sell cereals, but the lure of an annual £100,000 may be the biggest pull of all

Fortunes often tend to favour the brave

With the benefit of hindsight we could all be fabulously rich, if only we, or our grandparents, had spotted the right opportunities. For example, if you had invested \$1,000 in the Coca-Cola company before the Wall Street crash you would now be looking at a \$10 million fortune.

Greater gains can be yours if you venture into the smaller company sector. But Jeremy Batstone, head of research at NatWest Stockbrokers, says this is a money-making venture for those who are prepared to lose money. He said: "Backing these companies is like betting on the 2.30 at Newmarket. For every one you get right, you get 20 wrong."

There have even been winners this year in the otherwise lacklustre investment trust sector. The capital shares in Scottish National, a split capital investment trust, have risen from 118p at the end of 1997 to 193.5p, touching 222.34p.

Those with no faith in their share-picking abilities should put their trust in Ernie to boost their wealth. The Premium Bond prize draw has created 53 millionaires, the latest an investor from South Yorkshire. His or her holding is a restrained £2,581. But about 12 of these Ernie millionaires enjoy an extra advantage. They have the maximum £20,000, or very near it, in Premium Bonds.

Besides being the only form of gambling where you do not lose your stake, Premium Bonds have two major selling points: the prizes are tax-free and there is no publicity. Unfortunately for those who dream that they may be unwitting millionaires, there are no unclaimed million-pound Premium Bond prizes. However, unpaid prizes now amount to £41 million and do contain some £10,000 prizes and one £25,000 prize.

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Norwich to offer product refunds

IN a move more often associated with high street shops than the financial service industry, the Norwich and Peterborough Building Society is to allow customers who change their minds about an investment in 14 days to return or exchange products.

From Monday any investor opening a new account will automatically be given two weeks to switch to another account with the society or withdraw all their money without charge or notice.

Alan Samuels, N&P's General Manager for Business Development, said: "If you are going to buy a new fridge-freezer and you have the choice between a shop which allows you to switch automatically and one which doesn't, you would choose the one that gives the extra guarantee."

Mr Samuels denied that the new facility was a precursor to any rate changes or account re-shuffles although both mortgage rate and savings rates increased by an average 0.25 per cent at the beginning of the month.

N&P's 'cooling-off' period will apply to its savings and investment products, including current accounts, postal accounts, offshore savings, notice accounts, children's savings, Tessa and fixed interest bonds.

Next fall may be a big one

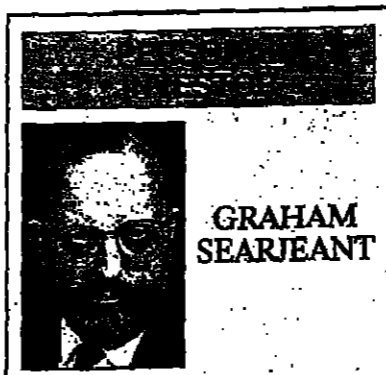
Familiar, isn't it. Thin August trading on Wall Street. Something moves the market down and it starts yo-yoing alarmingly. Tuesday's tremor was a nerve-jangling reminder of what happened a year ago. That time, the atmosphere changed and share prices quickly made up for lost time as soon as the big investors returned after America's Labor Day holiday on September 1. True, another nerve-jangling slide started in October, when the financial tsunami hit Hong Kong, but that lasted three days. The great American bull market charged snorting on its way.

In Britain, the FTSE 100 index slavishly followed the same pattern, with a few edges knocked off. For all the fears felt, questions asked, stomachs churned and tranquillisers swallowed, shares rose by about 30 per cent in the first nine months of 1997 and gained 25 per cent in the nine months to the end of last month, having shed a tenth in between.

Investors have long sought a seasonal pattern in this kind of share price volatility. The most famous lore says that you should "sell in May and go away". The rest of the injunction is open to serious disagreement, but "don't come back till Leger day" makes most sense. The Epsom Derby meeting, which started on June 5 this year, opens the traditional summer sporting and holiday season. The end is marked roughly by Doncaster's St Leger, the final flat race classic, scheduled this year for September 12.

Trade used to be lighter in these summer months, when rich private investors were away or at play, so price movements tended to be more volatile. Even allowing for explosive growth in corporate hospitality, the commonsense case is less convincing in an era dominated by professional fund managers.

Statistical analysis has never been sufficiently clear-cut to convince doubters



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

or disabuse believers in the "sell in May" rule. In the past eight years, it proved daft in four, a great strategy twice and good in the other two years, so long as you bought back in July.

Ever since the 1987 crash, fear of a repeat has tended to bring on seasonal palpatations in October, especially in years of heady advance such as 1997 and 1991. Mostly, Octophobia has just given braver souls a buying opportunity.

August is now the thin month, when New York is steaming, Paris is empty and British children are on holiday. Maybe the by-word should be "sell at Lammas". This would have been a good plan had the Stock Exchange existed when William I famously met his end at Lammaside. More recently, no statistical pattern justifies it.

This year, it might have been sensible to put a moratorium on share buying on August 1, if not to have sold. The superstitious will surely be looking over their shoulders again come October.

The arguments are the same as we cautious folk have been using for a year or more. Those who heeded them should have slept more soundly at night. If you opted for cash, you would have missed good profits. If you had put

new funds into long-dated gilt-edged stock, however, you would also have earned a higher return than the share average had produced. Long-term interest rates have fallen by about 1/4 points in a year, so capital invested in long-term gilts has risen more than the share index, as well as more steadily. It has also earned twice the income paid in dividends by FTSE 100 index companies.

Falling long-term interest rates provide the only underpinning for shares at today's fancy prices. But that can be a solid foundation in an economy growing at a decent rate with low inflation.

America has managed this for most of the decade. The process is still a bit like walking the tightrope, with periodic "oops" and "ahs" as it looks as though it might fall into inflation or recession. Asian flu is the current worry, but most still put their faith in Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the Federal Reserve, to keep the economy moving along.

A greater leap of faith is needed at home. The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee has been given a task as onerous as the Fed's, but is new at the job and has an untried machine. It seems most worried about inflation, while even the inflation-hunters who roam the gilts market plainly are not. Short-term interest rates have been set to slow the economy.

Low growth is the logical consequence. Big companies in favoured sectors have already moved into a period when profits are only plodding ahead. Even after a 10 per cent fall in share prices from the July peak, they look dear at more than 21 times the profits they are earning and with a dividend yield of only 2.5 per cent.

Ratings are higher in New York, so top UK shares have something to offer global investors. But if they start falling again, they could have a long way to go.

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The latest way to lure customers is the buyback deal, allowing you to change unused currency into sterling at the end of your trip at the same outlet. But some buybacks are free, while others can add another £7.50 to the cost of changing £500.

If you are changing more than £150 into currency, check out American Express. Amex charges a flat rate of £3 per transaction and a commission free buyback service, provided you keep your receipt.

The more money you exchange at American Express, the better the deal. For example, you will be able to exchange £300 at a commission rate equivalent to 1 per cent and for £600 that figure will halve to just 0.5 per cent.

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Travel UK has different rates depending on where you buy. Customers of the Travel at Marks & Spencer pay zero commission. Elsewhere, Traveler charges a minimum of £3 up to £150 and 2 per cent commission thereafter. Its buyback deal costs an extra 1.5 per cent.

There are slightly lower rates of commission at Traveler Gatwick branches, which charge 1.5 per cent up to £170.

with a £2.50 minimum charge. But the buyback fee remains at 1.5 per cent.

International Students Card holders or members of the International Youth Hostel Federation can carry out exchange rate transactions free of commission, but will be charged the usual 1.5 per cent rate for buybacks.

Thomas Cook charges 2 per cent commission with a minimum of £3. If you change more than £100, the buyback at the end of your holiday will be free. Barclays also charges 2 per cent up to a maximum of £500, no fee for buybacks. NatWest offers a better commission rate of 1.5 per cent up to a maximum of £15 with a minimum fee of £2.50, but buybacks attract the same charge.

The Post Office charges 1 per cent commission with a minimum of £2.50 and a maximum of £20. If you return to the branch where you carried out the transaction, your receipt the buyback is free.

KAREN WOODSON

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The great endowment protest

A decade ago, homebuyers with mortgages backed by endowment policies felt inebriatedly superior. They had been assured they had the best type of loan which, at no extra cost, would repay their debt, with some left over.

Today many feel shamed about their choice. The promised surplus has dematerialised. They must also increase their premiums, or see their policies yield insufficient to clear their loans.

Insurance companies that sell endowments are blaming everyone else for this outcome, overlooking the role played by their own incompetence and charges. The borrowers have no redress, as the lump sum promises were never put in writing.

Nowadays those who feel themselves hard done by in matters of the heart can now confront their love rat tormentors on Jerry Spring-



COMMENT
ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance Editor

er-style TV shows. But those with endowments have no such outlet. Building society clerks mumbling that they were compelled to pressure customers into endowments to meet insurance company commission targets do not have the same appeal to studio audiences as serial adulterers.

In its critical report on endowments, *Which?* magazine, however, suggests another form of consumer protest for those borrowers who feel ill-used (see page 55). If asked to

increase their premiums because they face a repayment shortfall, they should refuse. Handing over more money to a poor performing company is not cost-effective.

Instead they should put the cash into a unit trust savings plan. New borrowers can carry on the campaign by looking askance at sums now being produced by insurers showing that endowment loans are so much cheaper. The figures may now be in writing but they carry no guarantee.

A second look

FURTHER inadequacies of the unsatisfactory Isa emerged this week with the Inland Revenue's admission that the new account will have high running costs. This will further reduce the Isa's attractiveness to those on low incomes. If the Government wants to prove that its commitment to this group is genuine, it must now take some common sense measures. The poor would be better helped by access to low-cost means of borrowing, rather than savings schemes of dubious value. Those who do not meet the credit criteria of the banks face rates in excess of 50 per cent. Ministers should now examine ways in which they can add the credit unions which provide cheap loans through self-help. A new Labour virtue, or so they tell us.

Tessa may have her days numbered but increasing numbers of savers are still selling away their money in this tried and tested tax shelter, with many moving to the follow-on version of the tax-exempt special savings account.

About 4.5 million people are saving in Tessas and many more will join them before the savings scheme is scrapped in favour of Isas next April.

While new Tessas will no longer be on sale, savers will be able to carry on paying into their accounts until they mature after five years, in addition to any new savings they might make with Isas.

Alastair Conway, managing director of Clark Conway, a financial adviser, said: "While it is still possible to invest money tax-free, people should do it. We are advising our clients to get in while stocks last."

With a Tessa, you can save

Tessa — the urgent bills for those hardy savers

up to £3,000 in the first year, £1,800 in the second, third and fourth years and £600 in the final up to a maximum £9,000. As a legacy of John Major's days as Chancellor, Tesses have been around for nearly ten years and many dedicated followers have seen their initial investment mature and moved on to Tessa 2.

Follow-on Tesses on the whole pay better rates than originals because banks and building societies can rely on a larger lump sum.

Most savers transfer the total amount of capital maturing, to a maximum of £9,000, from their existing Tessa. However, you are not obliged

to reinvest the money with the same institution, and the organisation which looked after your first Tessa may not pay the best rates. Savers have up to six months after their first Tessa matures to find a new home for their money.

Bob Marriot, research manager at Sedgwick Noble Lowndes, said: "If you are going to hold cash, you might as well have it in a tax-free environment."

"But if you are looking for a follow-on Tessa, you need to shop around. Don't immediately go into the Tessa 2 offered by the organisation you have saved with. It is worth

checking what others are offering."

According to Moneyfacts, none of the top 16 follow-on Tessa offers rates under 8 per cent. Top of the chart is Barclays Bank with 8.5 per cent. However, savers must have invested the full amount in their previous Tessa and must make a deposit of £9,000.

The bank also charges £25 for the transfer. Also attractive is the 8.25 per cent paid by Furness Building Society. But again the minimum investment is £9,000 for that rate. Savers investing £3,000 are paid only 8 per cent.

The Yorkshire and the Lambeth Building Societies also re-

quire a £9,000 minimum investment and pay 8.15 per cent and 8.1 per cent respectively. Lambeth charges a £30 fee for transfers.

At first sight the Royal Bank of Scotland's offering should be among the best. At 8.2 per cent for deposits between £6,601 and £9,000, RBS's Tessa 2 certainly looks attractive.

However, eagle-eyed savers will notice that the interest is not compounded, so savers will not earn interest on interest.

So the effective rate, if the maximum investment is made each year, is just 7.24 per cent. The bank said: "It's mid-market, not top but not bottom either. There are people who want to know how much cash they are going to have rather than just the interest rate. This account allows them to do so."

SUSAN EMMETT

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- Best UK Equity Trust - UK Growth - Money Observer
- Best UK Equity Income Trust - Income - Money Observer
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Keeping the share price up

SHARE OF THE MONTH
STELLA SHAMOON

Despite all the hype about Viagra, Pfizer is a world-class act among drug companies

The New York and European stock markets are as unsettled and unpredictable as the weather this summer — as short-term exuberance and uncertainties blow hot and cold air in turn over share prices. None can predict the market's short-term behaviour. But the leading Western economies bask in a climate conducive to growth in shares of world-class businesses over the longer term.

Look through today's clouds at the above-average returns that shares have consistently yielded over the years. Persistence, perseverance and patience pay off — as long as the right shares are purchased in the first place. The US drugs sector, notably Pfizer, offers excellent prospects for double-digit growth in sales and earnings over the next several years.

For all the hype over Viagra, a treatment for male impotence, the fact is the little blue pill is not all that's keeping Pfizer's share price up. Even without Viagra, Pfizer has an impressive list of leading line drugs.

Norvasc is Pfizer's largest selling product and the bestselling hypertension medicine in the world. It should exceed last year's sales of \$2.2 billion. Zolof, for depression, increased world sales in the second quarter by 23 per cent to \$98 million, and is expected to reach \$2 billion next year. Sales of Zyrtec, an anti-allergy medicine, were up 51 per cent to \$104 million in the second quarter alone. Trovan, a quinolone antibiotic, approved to treat 14 different kinds of infections, is another potential money-spinner in Pfizer's portfolio.

Pfizer is on a roll, with seven important new drug entities to launch worldwide within the next year or so. They are Viagra (impotence); Lipitor (cholesterol); Celebra (COX-2 inhibitor for arthritis); Trovan (antibiotic); Zeldox (schizophrenia); Tikosyn (arrhythmia) and eletriptan (migraine). Zeldox failed to receive US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval in the first round — a small setback in Pfizer's chief executive, William Steere's declared strategy to be the premier player in the world drug league, thus beating Merck by the year 2001.

Since Steere moved into the driver's seat in 1991, Pfizer has moved to number four from number 13 in world prescription drugs. Steere's strategy eschewed mega mergers in favour of investment of billions into

R&D, even at the expense of short-term profits and stock market popularity as was the case a few years ago. Pfizer has invested not just in science, but also in salesmen: its 4,500-strong US salesforce gives it the marketing muscle to be the partner of choice when smaller rivals put their big drug discoveries out to tender for co-promotion. For example, Pfizer is co-promoting Celebra with Monsanto's G D Searle. Celebra is expected to be one of the largest drug launches in 1999 and it could be launched by January.

Pfizer's co-promotion of Warner-Lambert's Lipitor, which challenges Merck's Zocor, and Aricept, for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease, and discovered and developed by Eisai Co, helped to push Pfizer's alliance revenues in the second quarter up by 32 per cent to \$198 million.

Co-promotion of rival's new drugs used to be a sign of pipeline weakness, but in Pfizer's case it demonstrates financial and marketing strengths and is part of its aggressive growth strategy. Viagra, Lipitor and Celebra are likely to prove a highly potent prescription for sales and profit growth for Pfizer for many more years. Pfizer has no big patent expiries until the year 2003; Viagra's patent expires in 2011.

Moreover Pfizer's partnerships with smaller development companies help to speed up carefully controlled testing of its new drugs. Pfizer remains a fast and flexible enterprise; witness the speed with which it ex-



Demand for Viagra has led to the ludicrous situation of people travelling abroad in order to obtain supplies

Even with one of the richest pipelines, Pfizer remains one of the industry's biggest investors in R&D. It will spend \$2.3 billion this year. Last year it spent \$1.9 billion or 15 per cent of total sales of \$12.5 billion, which embrace animal health interests deemed synergistic, albeit far less profitable than pharmaceuticals which are the bulk of Pfizer's business.

Pfizer's aggressive marketing means higher sales costs: 20 per cent higher in the second quarter at \$1.5 billion and these expenses will accelerate in the second half of the year as Pfizer reinforces its sales ranks in the US, Japan and Europe for Celebra's launch, and the entry by the end of the year of Viagra in 50 countries out-

rolled out faster by expedited FDA review procedures and aggressive marketing.

- Little or no exposure to South-East Asia.
- But outside the US, notably in Europe, growth is an anaemic 5 per cent, although big drugs can earn far better returns. Growth could be boosted if European authorities lift the ban on DTC advertising here for prescription drugs.
- As for Viagra, bulls say its annual worldwide sales could eventually reach \$5 billion to \$10 billion a year. Estimates of \$750 million in the US this year alone are probably too conservative. Viagra was introduced only in April, yet as of June 26, 2.7 mil-

only to remedy a medical condition and not as a recreational drug.

Pfizer's latest results show high-quality earnings, driven by nearly 30 per cent rise in volume, not price, which accounted for barely 2 per cent, and was in line with inflation. Overall, pharmaceuticals generated nearly \$2.9 billion of Pfizer's total revenues of \$3.6 billion in the second quarter, an increase of 37 per cent in drug sales over the same period last year, while net income for the quarter was \$628 million, a 38 per cent increase.

In the first six months of this year, the company's total revenues are 18 per cent higher at nearly \$7 billion and net income is up 25 per cent at \$1.3 billion over the same period last year.

But the stock market is manic-depressive about drug stocks. Pfizer has been at pains to guide analysts so as to avoid shocks on the upside or downside.

Pfizer's shares are among the best in an exciting sector. The shares weathered well the turbulence on Wall Street this week. At \$105.5, they are 12 per cent off their peak and yield 0.7 per cent. Do not wait to buy them on a dip — you might miss it. Buy them now, in minimum 100 share lots in sterling via UK stockbrokers as Stockrade, or in dollars via Charles Schwab.

Stella Shamoan is a private investor. Readers who buy shares mentioned in her column do so at their own risk and are warned that the shares can go down as well as up.

Pfizer has invested heavily in salesmen, with 4,500 in the US alone

exploited Viagra, which was originally side the US. In the UK alone Pfizer will double its sales force to 900.

Direct to consumer advertising (DTC) has brought the dynamics of brand management into the business of selling prescription drugs in the US, a market which accounts for about two thirds of world profits. The fundamentals in the US drugs industry are robustly healthy.

- Growth in demand for drugs of both the medicinal and recreational/lifestyle-enhancing variety is accelerating amid greater affluence and an ageing population.
- High-margin selling prices that are unimpeded (so far) by government controls.
- Many new drugs in the pipeline.

lion prescriptions were filled and \$411 million in sales recorded, including substantial trade stocking of the product. Outside the US, only Switzerland has so far approved Viagra, which is expected to sell well abroad even if it is not reimbursed.

Never mind bullish analysts, even some of Pfizer's competitors say privately that Pfizer should generate 25 per cent growth in earnings over the next five years on the back of Viagra which almost overnight has become both a must-have lifestyle drug and a superbrand.

The bears argue that the extent of the male impotence market is grossly overestimated. But that view assumes Viagra will be taken strictly

side the US. In the UK alone Pfizer will double its sales force to 900.

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price up

Susan Emmet looks at some of the financial problems associated with pregnancy

The mother of all job contracts



Blooming: Melanie Blatt of pop group All Saints has not let her pregnancy affect her professional earning capacity

With more than half of all pregnant women at work and two thirds back at work within nine months of giving birth, many women take maternity leave for granted, confident that their bosses now accept the right as a fact of life.

However, industrial disputes such as this week's case of Louise Neal, the executive who said she lost her job after having her baby, serve as a reminder that maternity law is fiendishly complex and riddled with loopholes.

Mrs Neal claims she was unfairly dismissed from her £50,000-a-year job at Tangeant International because she refused to take up a different post when she returned from her maternity leave. Mrs Neal's old job had been given to her deputy while she was away. Her employer claimed it was offering a promotion and that Mrs Neal had agreed to the new job before taking leave.

However, according to the Maternity Alliance, a charity that promotes maternity rights, Mrs Neal's case is far from unusual. Sophie Robinson of the Maternity Alliance said: "Louise Neal is a typical example of the problems we get all the time. A lot of women find it a real shock to find that they have been forgotten while they are away. Some give up the fight and leave the job."

Maternity rights are governed by six Acts of Parliament and four European Directives or treaties on top of any other arrangements companies might have with their employees. About 50,000 working women get pregnant every year and by law they are entitled to return to the same job, with the same terms and conditions, after a minimum of 14 weeks maternity

leave, no matter how long they have been with their employers.

However, if by 11 weeks before the baby is due, the woman has been with the same employer for two years, she is entitled to an extended break of 40 weeks, 11 before the birth and 29 after.

There are two important deadlines to remember — one at the start and one at the end. The woman must let her employers know in writing when she intends to take her break 21 days before the start of the maternity leave and whether or not she will be returning to work.

After 11 weeks of maternity leave, the employer can ask the mother to confirm if she intends to return. But it is up to the woman to make sure her employers are aware of her plans. If she is on an extended maternity leave, the woman must give 21 days' notice of when she plans to return to work. If the mother is too ill to return, she can extend her maternity leave by four weeks but must submit a doctor's certificate before the end of the maternity leave. However, if she still does not return after the extra four weeks, she could lose her right to return.

Lisa Mayhew, employment specialist at Charles Russell, the solicitors, said: "People think it's going to be easy but maternity rights is a legal minefield. Employers should send a letter but it is the employee's obligation to confirm they are coming back. If you don't tell them you are coming back you could lose your right to return."

For the first six weeks of maternity leave, mothers are entitled to statutory maternity pay of 90 per cent of the normal weekly earnings. After that the mother receives a basic £57.70 for eight or 12

weeks depending on whether she is on a short or extended break. The basic sum is adjusted annually but some organisations may pay an additional amount. Mothers are also entitled to receive all the benefits provided under their contract of employment such as a company car for the first 14 weeks of maternity leave.

However, only mothers earning over £64 a week, the lower limit for national insurance contributions, qualify for statutory maternity pay. That means one in five women receives no SMP.

Ms Robinson said: "SMP comes as a big shock to women who have always worked. Very often women come across benefits and income assistance schemes for the first time. A lot are very worried about paying the mortgage."

Families on low incomes are entitled to a one-off payment of £100 to help towards the cost of a new baby. Single parents may also claim income support and couples family credit. However, the loss of earnings during maternity leave can spark financial difficulties even for families on higher incomes.

Liz Crawford, executive manager for Fiona Price & Partners, the independent financial advisers for women, said: "There is no magic and women must plan ahead. We advise women to put as much as possible into their pension before they have a baby and to have an emergency fund in a good deposit account. It's a good idea to save up as much as you can afford, enough to live on for six months, and to reclaim the gross interest if you are not paying tax."

Next week - the cost of children

HAVING a baby is stressful enough without worrying about long-term money matters. But unless you plan ahead, keeping up mortgage payments and pensions contributions could add to the sleepless nights that are part and parcel of parenthood.

Missing months, or even years of pension contributions when you have children can seriously undermine your pension. According to Liz Crawford, executive manager at Fiona Price and Partners, losing five years of pensions contributions can knock up to 20 per cent off the value of your pension.

Most banks and building societies are reasonably flexible and may let you postpone a few mortgage payments especially if you have a PEP or repayment mortgage. However, if you have an endowment, you may still be required to pay the endowment premiums.

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THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

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Premium bond holders can now check if there are any unpaidd prizes due to them via National Savings' revamped Internet website.

prices to reflect the cost of finance required, or else go out of business. The booklet includes invaluable information on contractual interest on late payment, and imports, exports and foreign contracts.

THERE are now several thousand investment products on the market available to the individual investor, but the terms and conditions are many and varied.

A GUIDE has been produced in partnership with the Department of Trade and Industry which explains how the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 works and how it affects businesses.

LIZANNE ROSE

SAVERS' BEST BUYS

Table with columns: Account, Notice of term, Deposit, Rate, Interest paid. Includes Instant Access Accounts and Notice Accounts & Bonds.

CREDIT CARDS

Table with columns: Card type, Interest per month, APR%, Fee per annum. Lists Capital One Bank, RBS, and Nationwide.

PERSONAL LOANS

Table with columns: Lender, Rate, Monthly payment on £5,000 for 3yrs with insurance, Monthly payment on £5,000 for 3yrs no insurance.

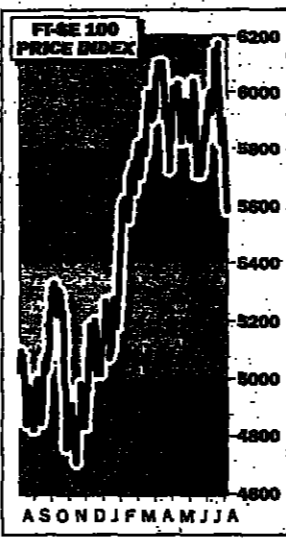
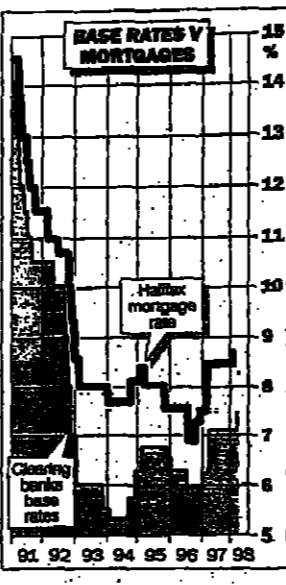


Table with columns: Gross rate, All tax rates, Mth/maximum investment £, Notice, Contact. Lists various investment products like Ordinary A/c, Investment A/c, etc.

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance.

Table with columns: SINGLE LIFE (level ann), Female: Age 60, Age 65, Age 70. Lists various insurance products and their rates.

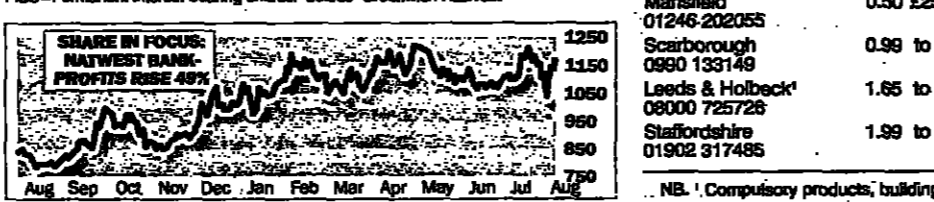
Statistics compiled by Lizanne Rose

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

Table with columns: Investment (£), Company, Standard Rate (%). Lists various income bond products from GE, ITT, and AIG.

PIBS

Table with columns: Lender, Interest rate %, Loan size, Max %, Notes. Lists various PIBS products from Bank of Scotland, Halifax, etc.



SCOTCHER LIFE INVESTMENTS

Table with columns: Lender, Interest rate %, Loan size, Max %, Notes. Lists various investment products from Scotcher Life.

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Table with columns: Bid, Offer, Why, Yld. Lists various financial products and their prices.

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Large advertisement on the right side of the page with text like 'Not too late to switch', 'Savings Rate', 'Mortgage Rate', and 'Personal Loans'.

Not too late to switch failing Peps

With less than a year to go before Personal Equity Plans (Peps) are consigned to oblivion, investors should look at their schemes to see if they should transfer their holdings to get a better return.

BEST Investment, the independent financial adviser, has put together a list of the worst-performing Peps over a three-year period. The list of dog funds includes some of the most high-profile names. For example, Equitable, one of best-known pensions managers, offers a special situations fund that has underperformed the market by nearly 30 per cent over a three-year period; two of M&G's funds have underperformed 13 and 23 per cent respectively, while Mercury, another household name, offers a fund that underperforms by 11 per cent.

Jason Hollands of BEST Investment said: "The best-performing unit trust grew by 165 per cent, while the worst achieved a paltry 29 per cent." He pointed out that investors could easily transfer their investments if they thought that they were performing poorly.

BEST Investment (0171-321 0100) looked at the performance of some of the smaller companies funds in comparison to the Hoare Govett Smaller Companies Index. The dog funds it identified include the AXA Sun Life UK Smaller Companies fund, the Baillie

Gifford British Smaller Companies fund, and the Murray Smaller Companies trust. These funds underperformed the market by 10 per cent, 20 per cent and 13 per cent, respectively. The financial adviser also pinpointed the "Euro-dogs" — funds investing in the shares of European companies. The poorest performing funds included the Canlife European Equity and Bond fund, and the Scot Life European fund. These underperformed the market by 15 per cent, 22 per cent, and 14 per cent respectively over three years.

For those who are keen to invest in Peps before they disappear, Allenbridge (0171-409 1111), the Pep specialist, gives a list of recommended plans. For capital growth, the adviser recommends the Credit Suisse Fellowship fund, the Gartmore UK Smaller Companies Fund, the Fidelity UK Growth Trust, and the Investco UK Smaller Companies Trust. All the funds show three-year returns greater than 100 per cent.

Those seeking lower income and the potential for capital growth, Allenbridge suggests two equity-based income Peps — the Perpetual High Income and the Newton Higher Income. Both have produced returns that are greater than 100 per cent over three years.

CAROLINE MERRELL

Wary investors exercise their options and move to Peps

Karen Woolfson says saving in protected funds is a good idea, but you can still lose out

The nervous mood in world stock markets this week has raised interest in protected personal equity plans (Peps) that promise to safeguard your capital if shares take a tumble. Scottish Widows Safety Plus, Edinburgh Safety First and Govett UK Equity Safeguard are among the funds that invest in a mixture of shares and have a protected price that increases if the market rises and cannot fall below a certain level if prices fall. Derivatives, that is, futures and options, provide the protection (see box below).

However, investors pay a price for this reassurance and should be aware that their capital may only be safeguarded, not guaranteed, although the Sun Alliance Portfolio Growth Pep and Govett UK Equity Safeguard do provide capital protection. The protected price does not reflect the full extent of any market rise, which means that if share prices rise you lose out. Some critics of protected Peps also point out that perhaps you should not be investing in shares at all if you think the market is going to fall.

The typical fund works in the following way: the protected price of the Edinburgh Safety First fund is raised each time the fund gains 10 per cent in value. This new protected price cannot be reduced for at least 12 months. If at the end of this period the UK stock market has fallen, then the protected price can be reduced by a maximum of 5 per cent.

The Edinburgh fund has increased its protected price to 29.16p for locking in portfolio gains made since its launch. This fund typically invests 95-97 per cent in equities while the rest is sheltered in options.

Experts are deeply divided on the value of protected funds. Bish Limbu, fund analyst at BEST Investment, the Pep specialist, said: "When these funds were introduced, we were bullish about the market, so we didn't believe there was a need for safeguards. However, the UK stock market looks highly valued now and it makes sense for investors to shelter gains by moving assets into this type of fund."

Ian Millward, investment marketing manager at Chase de Vere Investments, is less enthusiastic. He said that, although the funds will cushion you against a downturn similar to the 1987 crash, they make less sense if the market falls gradually.

He explained: "The complicated ways in which some funds work means that your capital could be diminished by a greater percentage over the course of a year than the overall decline in the market."

"Say you invest £1,000 in a fund and then the market starts to fall. Under the fund's protected price fund terms, you cannot lose more than 3 per cent of your capital in a quarter. But this would still reduce your investment to £970.

"However, in the next quarter the fund manager has the power to reduce the price by another 3 per cent, which



has dropped to 88p because the safety price is no longer set at 95p but at 85p. That's the nightmare scenario."

Give Scot-Hopkins, director of Towry Law Financial Services, gave warning that investors should check where the charges for buying options come from and should ask whether they are taken out of dividend income or come direct from the fund.

David Lloyd, director of Inversolve, the investment product consultants, said: "Pure equity funds may perform better over the long term, but short term a protected fund may be worth going for. Some investors are worried there will be a crash. If that happened, protected funds would suddenly start coming top of the performance tables, but they'll never outperform a pure equity fund when the stock market is buoyant."

If you invested £1,000 in the Edinburgh Safety First in the year ending July 1, 1997, it would now be worth £1,096, which is a 9.6 per cent increase. Scottish Widows Safety Plus reveals a 6.3 per cent upturn over the same period, so £1,000 invested would now be worth £1,063. This is less than Edinburgh, but still a respectable upturn for an investment offering protection.

But Lloyds Bank Safety First comes top of the performance tables for sheltered funds with a 13.8 per cent rise over the past year, so £1,000 invested would be worth £1,138.

Mr Scot-Hopkins said: "You don't capture anything like the full growth on the way up, but at the current market levels you may want to go for extra protection if it falls."

He said the critical factor in deciding to opt for a protected fund is the timescale. If an investor is taking a five-to-10-year view on equities then a protected fund could stunt growth and it would probably be sensible to opt for a pure equity fund. If you are approaching retirement and are reluctant to move out of equities completely, but do not want to risk losing the investment, a sideways move into a protected fund for reasons of security may be the answer.

Mr Scot-Hopkins said investors taking a two-to-three-year view may benefit from putting some money into a protected fund. But he added that it was also worth exploring the possibility of investing in a cash deposit or fixed interest fund that can provide the degree of protection some people may be looking for.

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HOW FUTURES AND OPTIONS WORK

The fund manager may buy what are known as 'put' options that will give him the right to sell shares at a fixed price in the future. So, if he thinks a stock trading at 100p is likely to fall to 60p over the three months, he will buy an option to sell the stock for 100p at some point during this period.

In this example, he pays 5p or 5 per cent of the stock's price to buy the option and if the stock falls to 60p then a return of 35p (40p profit minus the 5p cost of the option) will be made.

He will make a return as long as the price falls below 95p, in other words by more than 5p or 5 per cent, which is the initial cost of the option. If his view on the stock proves to be incorrect and the stock only drops by a fraction to 99p, then he will make a loss of 4p on each 5p option. If the stock remains at 100p or rises, then the option is completely worthless and the maximum will be lost, which is the 5p price of each option held. So the loss is limited to the amount paid for the option.

A spokesman for the London International Financial Futures & Options Exchange (Liffe) said: "If there is a huge fall in the stock market, then 'put' options can be exercised, which is like paying out money to provide some insurance in case of a crisis. But you will be paying the price of the put option to protect your investment in the event of a sharp downturn."

Safety funds may also buy 'call' options. For example, the manager may buy a 5p 'call' option for the right to buy a share at 100p within the next three months because he believes the price will increase to 150p over that period of time. If the price rises to 150p, then he will make a profit of 50p minus the 5p initial option price, which comes to 45p. However, the worst-case scenario would be if the share price was 100p or less at the end of the period, which would render the option worthless.

If the same stock was worth 103p after three months, then he would lose 2p of the initial option price up to a maximum loss of 5p or 5 per cent.

He may decide to write a 'call' option instead because he believes the market will move sideways or move down. So he will be paid or receive the 5p option price to "write" a call option rather than to buy one.

If the stock remains at 100p then he will make 5p for each option held in a dull market, but if the stock rises to 150p then he will still make 5p, so loses out on the upside potential.

The Liffe spokesman said: "As long as the underlying stock is owned by the institution trading options then the investment risk is limited. These are called 'covered' options. You're cushioning the downside and limiting the upside potential."

The regulations for 'safety' funds rule out the use of 'naked' options, which do not provide any cover and can result in unlimited losses.

Tony Whalley, investment director of Scottish Widows Investment Management and fund manager of Scottish Widows Safety Plus, said: "The risk investors are taking is less than a standard equity fund and more than a building society and the risk/return profile reflects this.

Basically, the higher the risk, the higher the return."

Scottish Widows buys 'put' options that give the fund the right to sell shares at a fixed price in the future. They also buy 'call' options that allow the fund manager to buy shares at a fixed price, allowing them to take advantage of any increases in share values to pick up stock cheaply at the option price.

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Tourists paying for costly cover

HOLIDAYMAKERS could be paying up to three and a half times more for their travel insurance and may be actually buying cover without realising (writes Susan Emmett).

According to Columbus Travel Insurance, nearly half the tickets sold by Eurostar already included cover that was more than 80 per cent higher than the cost of a policy from a specialist.

Insurance for a two-week trip to France cost £21.20 from Eurostar compared with £13 from Columbus.

Travel insurance bought from airlines or ferry companies was also more expensive. British Airways charged £26.50 while P&O asked for £18.60.

The most expensive cover came from credit cards and travel companies. Barclaycard was by far the dearest at £45.95 and cover from Amex cost £35.50. Lunn Poly and Going Places charge £39.95 and Thomas Cook £38.85.

However, the sale of annual travel insurance at American Express went up by 327 per cent last month before the increase in insurance premium tax on August 1.



As a well-travelled dog, Lassie only ever takes to the skies in her executive jet these days

Forget the cost, a private jet is the status symbol, says Clare Stewart

Taking to the skies on a flight of fancy

It is the essential accessory for pop stars, tycoons, sports professionals and, this week, it seems even the canine star of the new movie *Lassie*. Forget stretch limousines, or supersonic trips on Concorde; it is travelling on a private jet that marks you out from the crowd.

While ordinary mortals stand in queues at Heathrow and fight to get near the baggage carousel, corporate big cheeses, politicians and pop stars are whizzing about the world in their personal planes sipping champagne.

But how much does it cost and is it only millionaires who can even consider travelling on a private jet?

While owning a private jet was once the preserve of heads of state and entrepreneurs such as Bill Gates, newly rich Brits, who neither run the world nor own it, are queuing up to join the new million-high club.

There are some 270 private jets based in the UK transporting the likes of the Spice Girls, pop band Blur and Bernie Ecclestone, the Formula One chief.

Although sales have taken off in the past five years, buying a plane is still a pricey business. A new Learjet might set you back about \$15 million (£9.2 million), while a larger Gulfstream plane could cost a cool \$45 million, says Kate Sarsfield, from *Flight International*, the specialist magazine.

However, the costs do not stop there. You will need to pay the salaries of the captain and first officer (if it is a large jet), also for a steward or stewardess to pour your champagne, and the costs of five-star hotel accommodation for them at your destination.

The aircraft will also need to be insured and serviced at regular intervals, both when you need it and when it is idle waiting to be used. You will also have to fork out a tidy sum every year for fuel and landing fees as well as for housing it in a hangar.

One alternative to owning your own plane is to take a part share in a jet, through so-

called fractional ownership. It is a concept developed in the US, which is now becoming more popular in the UK and Europe. The leader in the field is Zurich-based NetJets, part of the US group Executive Jet, which launched its fractional ownership business in Europe in 1996.

NetJets offers the opportunity to a part share in a plane that entitles the owner to a specified number of flying hours. For example, the minimum purchase is for a one-eighth interest in a plane, which entitles the owner to 75 hours' flying time. The owner also pays a fixed monthly charge, and an hourly charge based on the time spent on the plane.

For example, says Kevin Russell, a senior vice-president at Executive Jet, a one-eighth interest in a Cessna Citation S/II plane, which can carry seven passengers, will cost an initial \$30,000, with a monthly management fee of \$9,750 and \$1,950 per hour of occupation of the plane.

This form of ownership is not a type of timeshare emphasises NetJets because owners are not limited as to when they can use the aircraft. Availability is guaranteed 365 days a year, subject to a minimum of six hours' notice.

Buying a part ownership gives an interest in perpetuity, says Mr. Russell, but owners do not have to extend the agreement once the initial ownership period has run. NetJets will repurchase an ownership interest "at fair market value", specifying a minimum of 24 months for the smallest planes through to 36 months for larger aircraft.

The market value will be affected by the general health of the economy and the demand for private jet use. A part ownership of this type can also offer tax advantages for business users, who can depreciate the investment over time.

NetJets counts sports stars such as Tiger Woods and Pete Sampras among its customers, together with large corporations, business people and wealthy individuals.

Warren Buffett, the renowned investor, having been

Lender defend policies despite warning by CA

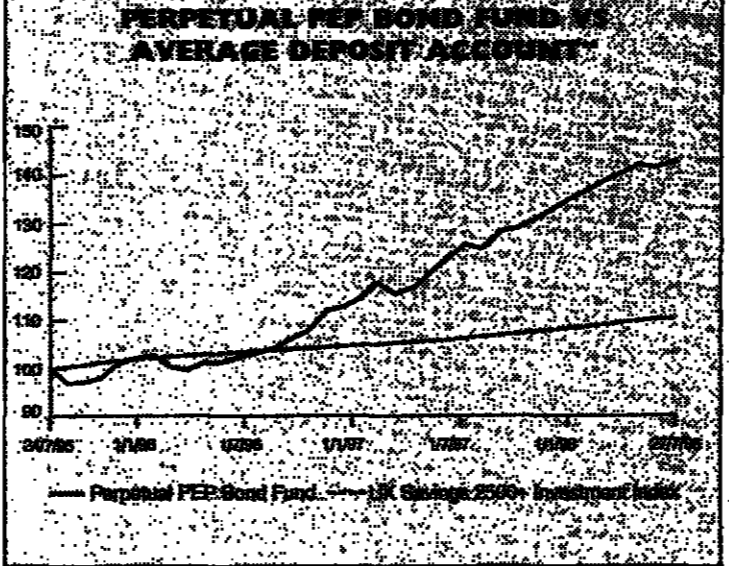
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A report from the Consumers' Association condemning endowment policies has been criticised by Scottish Amicable, the life insurance company owned by the Prudential.

The findings in the report claimed that most endowments offer very poor value for money. Their returns are depleted by high charges and poor performance. Despite the fact endowments have been under continual attack over the last few years, they are still routinely offered by many of the UK's biggest lenders. Halifax, for instance, said that 50 per cent of its borrowers are still paying in to endowments as a means of paying off a loan, while Abbey National said that it found that some of its customers favoured endowments.

As well as attacking the endowment policies already in force, the survey also warns borrowers against taking out the policies that are currently offered.

However, Scottish Amicable, strongly disputes the findings of the *Which?* report. It claims that, with interest rates set to fall, those with endowment mortgages, where only the interest is paid off, are at an advantage.

Gavin Stewart, director, said: "If you have a £50,000, 25-year mortgage, taken out when interest rates are 10 per cent, then after five years, your outstanding capital is £46,900. If interest rates fall by 2 per cent then the interest rate saving is 2 per cent of £46,900 or £78 per month. If you have an interest only mortgage your outstanding capital is £50,000 and hence your saving is 2 per cent of £50,000 or £83 per month."

"In addition, the part of your total payment that is repaying capital will only gain the benefit of 8 per cent per annum instead of 10 per cent return in future and so, to ensure that capital is repaid, an extra £23 will be included in your total monthly payment

Lenders defend policies despite warning by CA

for capital repayment. In essence your payment is reduced much less under a capital and interest mortgage than under an endowment mortgage (by £28 a month in this example)."

He also said that endowments were useful because they offered an element of life insurance. Despite Mr Stewart's claim, the CA research shows that some policies taken out a decade ago, at the height of the housing boom are unlikely to be on course to pay off loans.

For example, according to the magazine, using an example of a low-cost endowment, the total amount paid in to a Commercial Union endowment actually exceeds the surrender value, by some £277, on a £72 per month policy. This actually equates to a return of -0.7 per cent. Other companies with policies that show returns of less than 1 per cent over the decade include Colonial Life, Scottish Amicable and Royal Life.

Companies that had returns that were between 1 and 2 per cent include Ecclesiastical, Friends Provident and Winterthur Life. Any investment in a unit trust Personal Equity Plan (PEP) that tracked the UK index would have shown much greater returns.

Some policies have shown

such poor results that the companies have been forced to write to policyholders to encourage them to increase their premiums so that they remain on course to pay off their loans.

According to the magazine, which surveyed more than 40 companies, endowments continue to offer poor value to investors. The magazine said that surrender values on most endowment policies were pitiful; it also warned consumers to avoid the endowments that are now on offer. The magazine gave warning against policyholders increasing their premiums. It said: "Don't increase your premium just because your insurer says so; you may be throwing good money after bad."

Financial advisers also warn borrowers not to increase payments in to endowments just because they were advised to by their insurance company. One saw it as a way for the insurance company to increase its funds under management. Other savings plans such as Personal Equity Plans (PEPs), could be a cheaper and more cost effective way of topping up the endowment. If the borrower has used his or her annual PEP allowance, unit trust savings plan could still be a more efficient way of topping up the endowment policy. The magazine's survey of endowments that continue to be offered by insurers reveals that the charges will continue to act as a drag on potential future returns. Allied Dunbar, Abbey Life and Colonial Life are among the highest-charging offices.

Halifax, said that it now tended to offer PEPs as a repayment vehicle to pay off a loan. It claimed that its borrowers, the majority of whom had endowments with Standard Life, were on track to pay off their mortgages. A spokesman said: "It is only natural that the returns will be linked to performance."

CAROLINE MERRELL

Hazel Spink looks at the pros and cons for UK investors of owning foreign shares

For a fist full of dollars

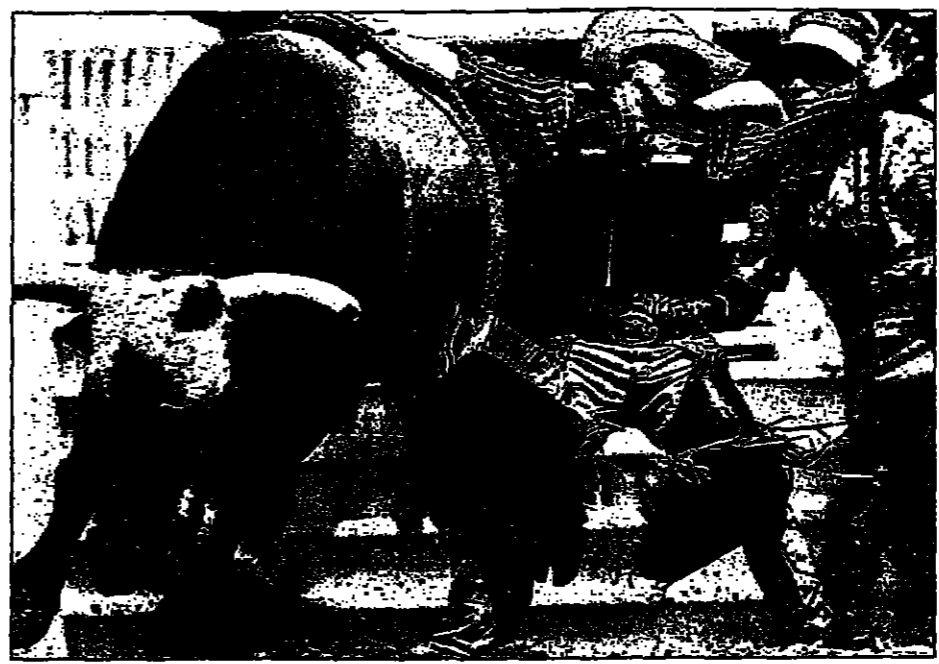
London Electricity may this week have been put up for sale by Entenenergy, its American parent. But although the overstretched Entenenergy may wish to quit the UK electrical sector, US groups still control seven other regional electricity companies. In most of the takeovers, investors have been forced to accept cash for their shares. But recently, Texas Utilities, which successfully bid for the Energy Group (formerly Eastern Electricity), decided to offer investors three options — cash, loan notes or shares in Texas Utilities. Investors who opted for shares in Texas Utilities received 0.355 Texas shares for each Energy Group share.

In this particular case, it seems unlikely that any Eastern Electricity customers who became shareholders in the company on privatisation were involved because, prior to being bought by Texas Utilities, Eastern Electricity was bought by the Hanson Group.

All privatisation shareholders were bought out at that stage. But as the trend for the takeover of the privatised utility companies continues, it seems only a matter of time before such investors are faced with the choice of cash or shares in a foreign company.

In 1990 when the electricity boards were privatised, 15 regional electricity companies were created. Since then, eight have been taken over by American groups. Of the ten water companies that were created, so far only one — Northumbrian Water — has been taken over by a foreign concern — the French group, Lyonnaise des Eaux.

Kate Jones, from Wotton under Edge in Gloucestershire,



Predators from deep in the heart of Texas can cause upsets for British shareholders

elected to take shares in Texas Utilities following its takeover of Energy Group, and is now experiencing some of the difficulties involved in foreign share ownership.

In a letter to *The Times* she said: "When the Energy Group was taken over by Texas Utilities I kept my shares and have just received a dividend of \$19.17. However, I am wondering whether it is possible to have a UK dollar account, and would it be worth it?"

It is true that simply paying the cheque into a UK bank account is not ideal. At NatWest, for example, dollar denominated cheques up to the equivalent of £100 can be paid into a sterling account but the

charge is £5. Obviously for relatively small amounts this charge is disproportionate.

But opening a dollar account may not be the answer. Dollar accounts, whether onshore or offshore, are really designed for those who are working or living abroad, have inherited dollars, are international business people or have substantial assets that they want to hold in dollars because they perceive it to be a safe currency.

Minimum investments can be high — often \$5,000 or even \$10,000 — and there can be significant charges.

NatWest offers personal customers both a current account and an interest bearing account. The current account re-

quires a minimum balance of \$2,000 in order for transactions to be free otherwise there is a charge of £10 a quarter. The interest bearing account requires a balance of \$1,000 in order for transactions to be free.

Although in theory an investor could open such an account and maintain the minimum balance required for free banking, simply to pay dividend cheques into, this money is then not "working" effectively for them.

Bristol & West International offers a 30-day and a 90-day notice account that have a minimum opening balance of \$5,000. However, the average balance is about £100,000.

Chris Bradshaw, Bristol & West International chief executive, said: "If you have small holdings of shares in foreign companies and you are receiving a small dividend, this is not really a good enough reason for opening a dollar account."

All customers are warned that, although the bank itself does not levy charges, they may still face handling charges by other banks involved in any transactions. Some foreign companies can pay dividends in sterling so it is worth asking if this facility exists.

If they cannot, a third, and perhaps the most viable option, is to find out whether the new owner has a dividend reinvestment plan. Texas Utilities, for example, does. These schemes, as the name suggests, allow investors to reinvest dividends into further shares in the company.

Tim Hogan, investor relations administrator at Texas Utilities, said: "We are looking at the possibility of paying dividends in sterling — a move which has been prompted by the inquiries we have received. In the meantime we recommend investors consider the dividend reinvestment plan."

The fourth option is to sell the shares. Peter Hargreaves, managing director of Bristol-based stockbroker Hargreaves Lansdown, said: "Investors who are holding onto shares in a company like Texas Utilities, because they think they might make a killing should realise this is highly unlikely."

Matthew Orr, partner of Kilk & Co said where investors had less than £5,000 or £10,000 to invest overseas, a unit or investment trust may be more suitable.

Leather and willow under the hammer

Conal Gregory looks at the growing market for cricket memorabilia

The resurgence of English cricket is filling the stands at Headingley. This reawakened passion for the game is also being seen in prices for cricket memorabilia. Earlier this summer a new record for a bat was set when Phillips, the auction house, secured £26,450 for W G Grace's bat used in an 1868 South Wales match — even though Grace was twice dismissed for naught. We answer your questions on other bits of collectible kit.

What factors affect a cricket investment? Authenticity and originality are important and the item should not be part of a large production run. Provenance is important and should be verified (such as by a photograph showing the item in use). In general, the more important the match, the greater the value.

Which cricketers are worth following? Leading internationals command the highest prices. Key players were W G Grace, Bob Willis, Robert Abel, Eddie Paynter, Jack Hobbs, Archie Maclaren, Walley Hammond, Arthur Shrewsbury and, from Australia, Victor Trumper, Clarrie Grimmett and Don Bradman.

Are bats a good investment? Two years ago, auction records were shattered when £23,000 was paid for the bat that Don Bradman of Australia used to score 212 against England in 1937 — against a £500 to £700 estimate. The previous record had been £1,300 for a bat used by Jack Hobbs. Yet many lesser examples can be secured. Victorian bats were £30 to £40 in 1991, and now sell for £150 to £200.

The 1950-51 bat of Everton Weekes (Barbados & West Indies), with which he scored five double centuries, fetched £1,207 (estimate: £600 to £1,000), partly because it was supported by a letter of authenticity and photograph.

Are balls worth collecting? A 17th century leather ball found when a house in Lewes, Sussex, was redecorated three years ago was sold at Christie's for more than £840. In May, 12 balls used in first-class and Test matches between 1937 and 1953 made £2,990.

Can postcards be valuable? Four early unsigned postcards showing Larwood, the famous 1932 bowler, achieved £790 at Vennett-Smith's sale recently. A card from W G Grace to a player, has jumped from £80-£120 five years ago to £200-£250. A photograph postcard of Victor Trumper from circa 1912 now makes £460. Are modern issues appropri-



A bat used by W. G. Grace made £26,450 this summer

ate? Much depends on the quality and rarity. Royal Doulton has issued a bone china 10in diameter plate with 22 carat gold edging to commemorate the 150th anniversary of W G Grace's birth. It is offered at £29.90, but is most unlikely to appreciate in view of the huge run of 7,500 copies.

Can older cricket ceramics be found? An 1880s Doulton Lambeth lemonade jug with cricket figures depicted has risen in price from £400-£500 six years ago to £950-£1,200.

A pair of nineteenth-century Staffordshire figures of a boy holding a bat and a girl with a ball makes £380-£400, and a pair of Copeland Parian figures of Young England and Young England's sister — a boy with England's sister and a girl with cricket bat — can fetch £1,300, quest mallet.

memorabilia increasing in value? The price rises have been marked. A 10in German Parian boy bowling has increased from £120 five years ago to £265, according to Britannia Antiques at Gray's Inn, London. A French bisque cricket boy holding a bat from 1880 has risen from £100 to £235 over the same period.

Are there any novelty items? A rectangular cast-iron table made with Grace's head depicted at either end, circa 1890, has risen from £400-£600 in 1990 to £1,600 today. Linen commemorative handkerchiefs, as early as 1785, depicting a game of cricket at White Conduit Club and printed with the laws of cricket in the margin, can be found. Look for belt buckles (a set of six Victorian ones can make £525-£550) and buttons.

However, cricketing prints have either fallen in price or not appreciated since the early 1990s. For a chrome-lithograph of E W Dillon from *Vanity Fair* expect to pay the same £2,000 now as eight years ago.

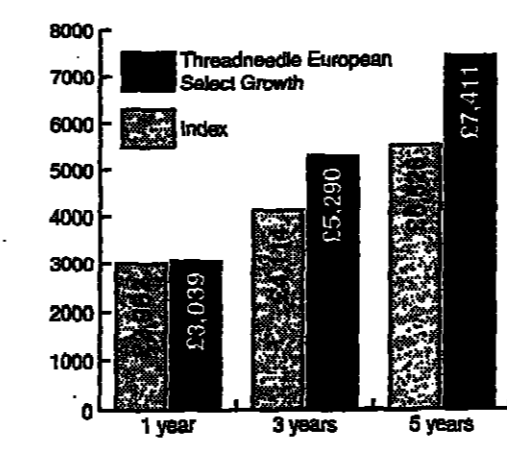
The Cricket Memorabilia Society at 21 Beechurst Avenue, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL52 6TY meets regularly and helps collectors to find their missing items.

The value of shares and any income from them can go down as well as up. Tax concessions are not guaranteed, their value will depend on individual circumstances. It will not be possible to continue investment in a PEP after April 1999 when the Government will introduce Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs). Threadneedle Investment Services Limited, Authorised Corporate Director and Unit Trust Manager. Threadneedle Portfolio Services Limited, PEP Manager. Regulated by BIPF and the Personal Investment Authority. Members of the Allied Dunbar and Threadneedle marketing group. *Source: Microcap, offer to bid current charges basis, net income reinvested. Performance over 5 years to 1 June 1998. Past performance is not a guide to the future. Exchange rates may cause the value of underlying investments to fall as well as rise. A dilution levy may be applied by the fund if required for the purpose of investor protection.

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ANNUAL EVENT 48

Graham Searjeant finds the market fall rather familiar

WEEKEND MONEY

CRUNCH TIME 47

How to win £100,000 over your breakfast



M-bug race against time

Marianne Curphey explains why it is important to check that your lifestyle is Millennium-friendly

The millennium bug threatens to wreck chaos around the world, wiping out computer systems which control water and electricity supply...



Teams of bug-busters like those who save the Earth in Armageddon, are at war with the Millennium code problems

small building society and you are concerned about whether they have made any progress on the Year 2000 problem...

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55 Which? v the insurers. The endowment row BUSINESS

Expats face CGT five-year hurdle

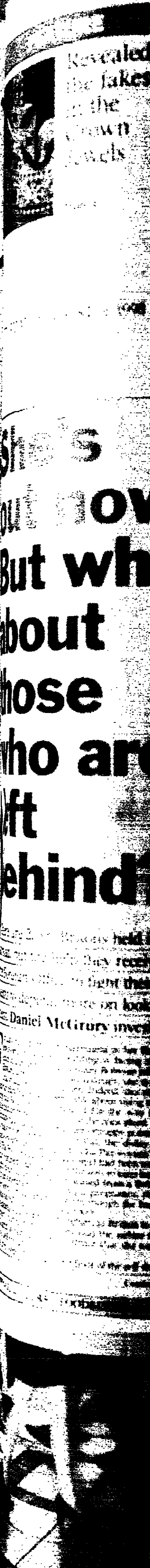
EXPATRIATES returning home from abroad this summer could be in for an unexpected capital gains tax bill because of a hidden clause linked to a change introduced in the last Budget.

Advisers caution against panic

Fears of interest rate rises, nervousness about the US economy and fears of recession in the UK sent the FTSE 100 index gyrating this week.

Advisers caution against panic. A lion in the New York Stock Exchange lifted spirits in a depressing week. Markets like the UK and so there is less danger of the kind of volatility you would find in an emerging markets fund...

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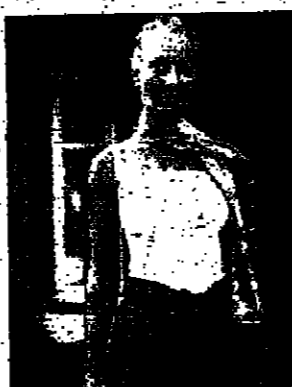
FEATURE



Revealed: the fakes in the Crown Jewels

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FASHION



It's a wrap: you can't go wrong with a sarong

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PETS



Song dog: this puppy will babysit — and herd buffalo

Page 13

ANNE ROBINSON



Watchdog bites back: the 'avenger with attitude'

Page 3

SATURDAY AUGUST 8 1998

THE TIMES
WEEKEND

She's out now. But what about those who are left behind?

There are 2,000 Britons held in jails abroad, but the help they receive from the Foreign Office to fight their cases seems to depend more on looks than merit. **Daniel McGrory investigates**

For having a fistful of marijuana in her flat for her own amusement, Alison Spedding is facing a 25-year sentence in a cramped, unsanitary Bolivian jail. Unlike most Britons abroad caught with drugs, she is not squealing that it was planted on her. Indeed, this respected academic and novelist has never been shy about using marijuana nor criticising the Bolivian Government for the way it behaves towards the Indian tribes which grow the coca plant.

Her friends have no doubt that her "stropy political views" are the real reason for the raid on her flat, the 18-day interrogation and the five months she has spent in La Paz women's prison without trial. The 36-year-old anthropologist had been warned that she was being watched, but she is not the sort to keep her mouth shut. Forty-eight hours after she was released from a Bolivian hospital following an operation for an ectopic pregnancy, 18 plain-clothes detectives took her flat apart — even though the bag of cannabis leaves was on full view in her bedroom.

Ms Spedding was planning to return to Britain to convalesce at her mother's home, but detectives said the airline ticket and the dollars found in her flat were evidence that she was leaving the country to sell the drug.

Sitting cross-legged on the stone floor of the cell she shares with



Karen Henderson, 20, was caught at Moscow airport with 10lb of cocaine in her luggage. Soon after Tony Blair intervened on her behalf, she was given a new trial and freed

Continued on page 2



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FOREIGN OFFICE CUTBACKS: THE PRISONERS ABROAD WHO HAVE BEEN FORGOTTEN

The unwritten rule is that it helps if you are a young woman who can elicit sympathy and whose family and friends make a lot of noise; it is even better if your continued detention threatens bilateral deals



Alison Spedding (left) wonders why politicians are not agitating for her release from a Bolivian prison. Peter Bryant (right) says the Foreign Office does not bother about his son, Steve, sentenced to 12 years in 1994



Paul Smith faces ten years in a Moroccan jail for drugs offences despite pleas of innocence



Continued from page 1 six other women and two of their children. Ms Spedding insists she was not trafficking drugs and asks why British politicians have not been agitating for her freedom.

She is left wondering why Tony Blair has not used his influence, as he did with Deborah Parry and Lucille McLauchlan, the two British nurses accused of murdering their colleague Yvonne Gilford in Saudi Arabia.

Foreign Office (FO) diplomats maintain that ministers do not interfere in the judicial processes of foreign governments, but there is evidence to show that they do, particularly if it is worth their while. Mr Blair asked about the nurses when he met the Saudi princes because he did not want continual headlines about the nurses' treatment to blight trade relations with a valued ally and customer.

He did the same in Moscow when he asked President Boris Yeltsin about Karen Henderson, a 20-year-old backpacker caught with cocaine in her luggage. Soon after the Prime Minister's intervention, she was happily given a new trial and freedom.

Last month, when aid worker Sally Becker was arrested for illegally crossing borders in Kosovo and sentenced to 30 days in jail, the FO went into a spin. Ms Becker's well-advertised hunger strike had envoys scurrying back and forth to her prison cell and making all the right

POLITICAL CLOUT: HIGH-PROFILE PRISONERS RELEASED FROM FOREIGN JAILS



Nurses Deborah Parry and Lucille McLauchlan owe their release to Tony Blair's intervention, while au pair Louise Woodward and aid worker Sally Becker relied on highly public campaigns

noises until the Yugoslavs threw her out of the country after ten days.

The unwritten rule is that it helps if you are a young woman who can elicit sympathy and whose family and friends make a lot of noise; it is even better if your continued detention threatens bilateral deals. Ms Spedding's misfortune is that Bolivia is not one of those countries that Whitehall frets about. She is opinion-

ated and has "gone native" in a land we know little about. Her mother, Maureen Raybould, who visited her in prison last week, says: "Ministers are not interested in her. She isn't the right sort for them. She is difficult but she is not a drug trafficker and does not deserve this sort of treatment."

Ms Spedding is not alone in arguing that she is the victim of a miscarriage of justice and that her own Government should be doing more to help. Many of the 2,000 or so Britons in prisons abroad complain they are not getting enough assistance from consular officials to fight their cases. Their families say that cutbacks in funding to the FO have affected its ability to take on these cases, so many are just forgotten.

Whitehall denies that but admits it has only the same number of consular staff as eight years ago and since then the number of criminal cases has doubled.

Pressure groups such as Prisoners Abroad and Fair Trials Abroad say more than half of those in jail are held for drug offences, with an increasing number convicted of business fraud. Prisoners Abroad says there are 79 Britons sentenced to 20 years or more, with most serving time in America, France

and South Africa. Amnesty International says there are few "British prisoners of conscience", such as the Christian groups which, before the days of glasnost, were held in Moscow for handing out Bibles in Red Square.

An Amnesty spokesman adds: "Almost all Britons are in jail on criminal charges, though obviously that can be used as a convenient way of punishing someone regarded as an irritant to the regime."

What is puzzling is that campaign groups are reluctant to shout about cases, preferring to lobby through religious or local organisations. Families with relatives jailed abroad believe headline-grabbing cases, such as Ms Becker and au pair Louise Woodward, do get more FO attention. Whitehall denies this, saying its primary concern is humanitarian, not arguing the rights and wrongs of someone's arrest warrant.

Ms Spedding's family argues that her case has just as much merit as the Saudi nurses. "She is an academic who has devoted her life to the Bolivian people," her mother says. "Why hasn't Tony Blair raised her case?"

When Shirley Hobbs wrote to the Prime Minister about her brother-in-law, Peter Hobbs, a lorry driver in the middle of a seven-and-a-half-year sentence for alleged drug smuggling in Bulgaria, she says her letter was ignored. "Peter is innocent. Even the British police say so. But he has been left to rot because it is in no one's political interests to get him out," she says.

"It is no good the Government saying it can't interfere until the legal processes have been exhausted. One of the Saudi nurses had not yet been found guilty and Mr Blair used his clout to good effect. And, but for the PM's intervention, Ms Henderson would still be in a Russian jail."

Ms Henderson, 20, always denied drug smuggling. She served two years after 10lb of cocaine was found in her suitcase at Moscow airport, which she said a Dutch companion had put there. Mrs Hobbs says: "Peter feels that if he was a pretty girl with a short skirt, then he would have been home long ago." Instead, he is waiting for a date for an appeal to the court in Sofia, which Mrs Hobbs describes as a waste of time and money.

"Peter is not important enough and nor is Bulgaria as a trade partner for anyone to bother."

Mr Hobbs, and his fellow driver John Mills, were returning with an empty lorry from Turkey when they were stopped at a Bulgarian border post. Guards walked straight to the unlocked tool box on the outside of the cab, where they found 20kg of heroin.

The guards were believed to be working on a tip-off, although the Britons insist they do not know how the drugs got there. A predictable response, but Stephen Jacobs, of Fair Trials Abroad, says: "The problem with the old communist regimes is they still can't grasp the idea that someone is innocent until proven otherwise."

Often drug dealers in Turkey hide heroin on an unsuspecting driver, then tip off the authorities, who are so busy watching for that one vehicle that they miss the other 700 which cross each day, including the one carrying the real consignment. Transport unions are lobbying governments in the European Union for special consideration for lorry drivers, who they say are often used as "unwitting mules".

Steve Bryant was sentenced in March 1994 after three tons of cannabis was found hidden in his truck-load of frozen squid following a search at the Moroccan port of Tangier.

The factory owner who loaded the squid admitted his guilt and exonerated Mr Bryant, but the 42-year-old father of four was still sentenced to 12 years without remission.

His father, Peter Bryant, says: "The FO doesn't bother with him, except that I have to send them £200 a month for his food and toiletries in the prison. I don't know how to fight his case any more."

Paul Smith, 34, from Pyldie in North Yorkshire, was a guest on a yacht which ran aground off the Moroccan coast in October 1996. The rescuers discovered cannabis sealed in the hull, which the boat's owner admitted was his. He pleaded, Mr Smith's innocence to the police but the former cabinet maker was sentenced to ten years, despite the intervention of Mark Hendrick, his Euro MP.

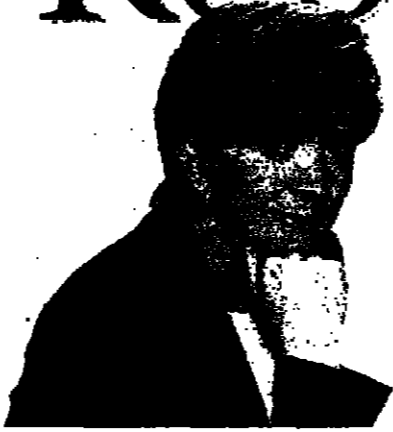
For the past 15 months, Professor David Lowry, an expert in human rights and international law, has been in a Portuguese jail accused of fraud. Michael Clapham, his local MP, has taken up the case. He says the 54-year-old father of two has to spend 22 hours a day in a cell with 13 others, including four with Aids. Mr Jacobs says: "It bothers me that young women get attention while middle-aged men are overlooked despite the merits of their case."

Advertisement for Magimix 'Le Duo' combined juice extractor and citrus press. Text includes: 'A juicy new idea from Magimix', 'Fruit or vegetables, the unique "Le Duo" will deliver juice from soft fruit, vegetables or citrus fruit quickly, easily. Quietly too, because Magimix's commercial grade motor is the most efficient around, that's why we guarantee it for five years.', 'Fancy some vegetable juice? Just drop in the heavy duty stainless steel juice extractor, put in your vegetables, and instant juice pours into your glass. Prefer some orange and lemon juice? Simply insert the citrus press for brilliant, no-fuss results. All parts are dishwasher-safe for easy cleaning. For more details write to: Magimix UK Ltd, 115A High Street, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1AQ. magimix. The one the top shelf we became a staple in all our...'

Pity & the ru Ma

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, partially cut off.

Anne Robinson



● "THAT'S not the first time I've seen your picture today," says the man with a cheery smile at passport control as I stagger off a flight from Athens into Terminal Two at Heathrow on Wednesday night. *Watchdog* has hit the headlines. It's an odd feeling. I've become the Avenger with Attitude and "the woman British business has declared war on". Ten major companies have gathered for a secret meeting to plan a strategy to combat the force of the programme.

I heard the news on a crackly mobile on the tiny, idyllic, largely unmodernised Greek island of Antiparos. (Hardly any telephones, an erratic supply of electricity, but oddly this week accommodating the Prime Minister of France and George Bush and Colin Powell, of whom more later.)

I am grateful Penrose has insisted I take the mobile. Or am I? It's the splash in the *Standard*. A page two in *The Guardian*. An item on the *Six O'Clock News*, he reports

before the line goes dead. I recharge the battery and, Eureka!, I dash from under a cool shower as my phone rings again. "Hello," says the voice. "Sylvia, I love you. I miss you. Please forgive me." I can't believe it. It's the bloody moron from Birmingham, who keeps dialling my number instead of the woman I now think very wisely ditched him.

I reconnect with Penrose later. Has anyone used that awful photo of me in the yellow jacket? I demand. No, no, says Penrose reassuringly. Changing planes at Athens, I grab the only English paper. Across the top of page one my canary-coloured top stares back.

● ONCE home I ring back several newspapers which have asked to interview me. First in the queue is Deborah Ross of *The Independent*, the *Ruby Wax* of the printed word. "Kensington you live? Where did I go wrong? I am in Crouch End with lino on the floor," she cries.

We arrange to meet the following evening after she has "researched" me. But I think we both know the general drift. Can she bring a photographer? There's a dilemma. Say no and it's asking for five paragraphs devoted to how you looked during the interview and how different you are from the studio pictures you have asked to accompany the piece. Say yes to the photographer

and it is no lighting and every crevice in your 53-year-old face on show. I settle for the latter. I am not sure if this is courage or cowardice.

● AND what of the ten major companies, who the *Daily Mail* sportingly suggests have met to form a victim support group. I am not surprised they intended to meet in private. The passion of *Watchdog*

viewers for customer care is surely by now known to them. The people we feature have very often exhausted every other avenue when they dial our number.

They have watched a washing machine flood their kitchen for days while the repairman insists that if he can't park directly outside their house, he can't come in. They have hung on for hours listening to

muzak. These are not people for whom only a Protection of Stupid People Act would suffice. They are you and me. Happy to understand when a cock-up occurs. Perplexed and angry when a customer service line is just a sing-song voice, which couldn't care less.

● BEFORE I leave Antiparos there's news of a wholly unexpected sighting of George Bush and Colin Powell. Alas, the only resident Englishman, a retired RAF officer, realises too late why the face of the man who doffs his cap as he jogs past is familiar. Back at our villa I urge each of my fellow holidaymakers to each prepare a topic in case George jogs by again and we have, say, 30 seconds of his time. My host says he would challenge the former President on America's lamentable attitude towards Cyprus. I suggest, given the time restriction, the words "Monica Lewinsky" and "cocktail dress" might reap a more interesting result.

● LATER in the week an insight into what you bring on holiday when you're Prime Minister. Lionel Jospin is at a private villa, but one excited hotel owner has the medical team — five doctors, three Greek, two French, and an ambulance. Apparently, there are frogmen fighting for space along the coastline and men with rifles in the bushes.

"How do you know they are security guards?" I ask my host as we spot two innocent-looking young males in swimming trunks in a speedboat coming towards us. Before he answers I see their arms. They look, remarks my host's son, like condoms filled with marbles.

● BACK HOME the doorbell rings. It is a photographer from *The Sunday Times*, a young reporter in tow. No special lighting. Oh, to have Jospin's men with limbs like Arnold Schwarzenegger surrounding me.

Pity about the rubies, Ma'am

A painstaking analysis reveals that not all of the Crown Jewels are the real thing. Alan Hamilton reports

Books do not come much more definitive than *The Crown Jewels — The History of the Coronation Regalia*. Nor, at £1,000 a copy, do they come much dearer. With only 650 leather-bound copies being produced, it would be the ideal gift for the bibliophile who has everything.

Producing such an extraordinarily detailed chronicle of the world's most famous single collection of jewellery has been a 15-year labour of love for a team of eminent historians and gemologists, with backing and help from the Royal Collection and Garrard, the crown jeweller, which recently merged with Asprey.

The book is also the first proper catalogue of the jewels. "We checked everything," says Alan Jobbins, one of three gemologists given royal permission to analyse the jewels for the first time. "Thousands of stones. In one crown alone there are 6,000 diamonds."

"We found that not all of the 'rubies' in the collection were rubies. Some were large spinels, of lower value. And we confirmed that the cutters did a superb job on the star attraction, the Cullinan I diamond in the Sovereign's Sceptre. Of course, you can't price anything like this but if it went to auction it would sell for tens of millions of pounds."

At 530 carats and measuring 6cm by 4.5cm by 2.7cm — the size of a large flattened egg — the Cullinan I is the largest colourless cut diamond in the world.

The photographs in the book had to be taken in conditions of utmost secrecy and security deep in the Tower of London, and they are brilliant, the best and most thorough set ever taken of the regalia.

What surprises, and perhaps disappoints, many visitors to the Jewel House in the Tower of London is that the majority of the Crown Jewels are not as old as they think, and certainly not in their present form. They are, in the main, post-Cromwell, and some date only from the Queen's coronation in 1953.

However, what makes the pieces — and the crowns in particular — worthy of such scholarly study is that successive monarchs have regularly altered them.

Take, for example, St Edward's Crown, used only once in each reign for the actual moment of coronation. Its stones are only semi-precious and of no great significance, as the crown used to be reset for each coronation.

The present 444 stones were set for George V's coronation in 1911 and have remained in the crown ever since. The crown itself is gold and dates from Charles II's coronation in 1661, but part of it was an old crown from Westminster Abbey that pre-dated the Cromwellian Commonwealth.



The Sovereign's Sceptre with the Cullinan I (approx lifesize)

Certainly, the circle has been cut and rejoined several times to fit various royal heads.

More familiar, and much more valuable in terms of its 2,800 stones, is the Imperial State Crown, worn by the Queen each year for the State Opening of Parliament. Made for Queen Victoria in 1837, it has been altered several times, including having its arches lowered to keep it more in proportion with the 5ft 4in stature of its present wearer.

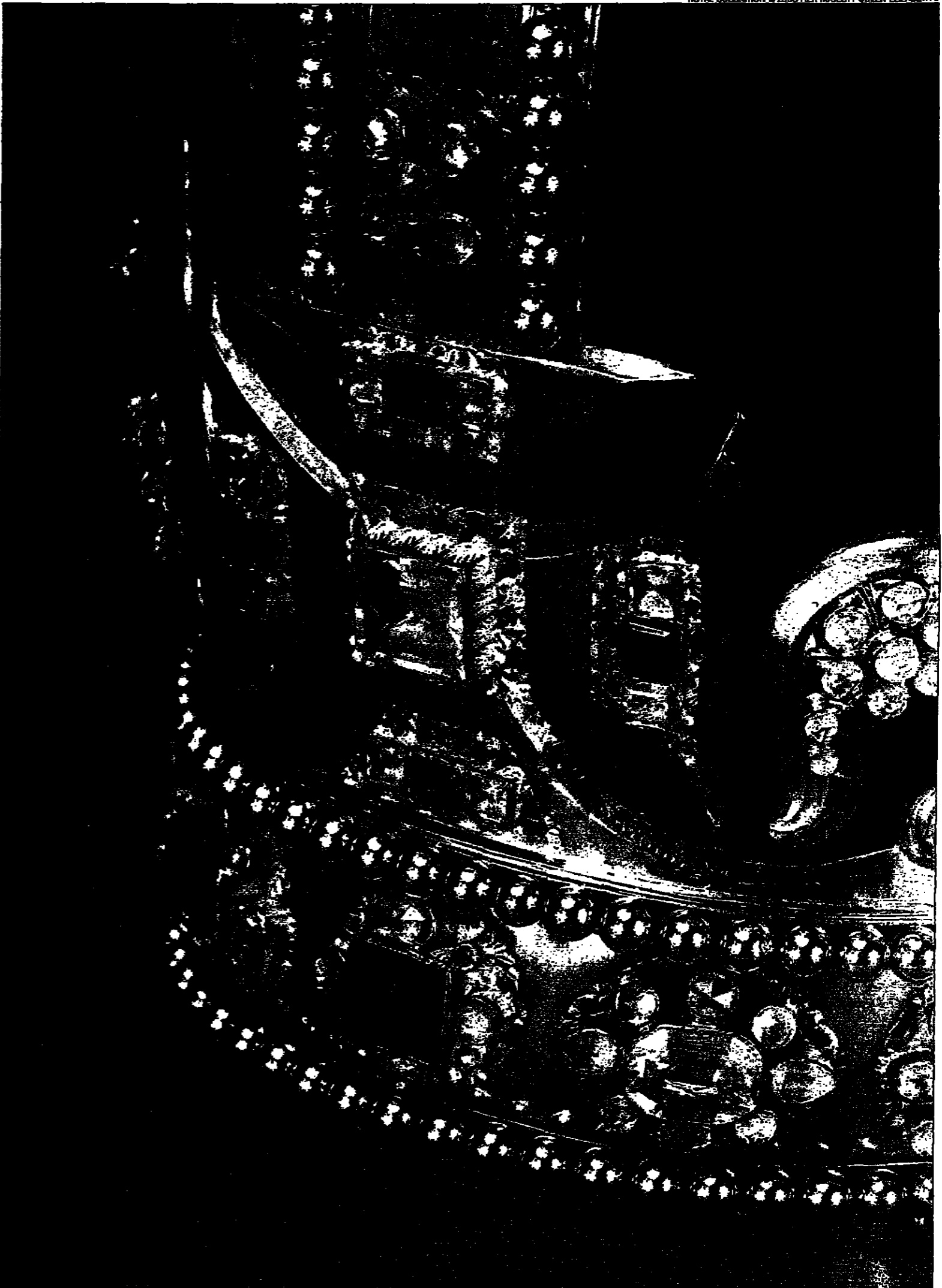
In the Maltese cross on top of the crown is a sapphire said to have come from the ring of Edward the Confessor when he was reinterred in Westminster Abbey by Henry II in 1163.

Under the cross are four drop pearls. One is a 19th-century replacement; the other three were given by Pope Clement VII to Catherine de' Medici, and by her to Mary, Queen of Scots in 1559. After Mary's execution they were bought by Elizabeth I, then passed in

succession to James I and down the line until George I. Prominent at the front of the crown is the so-called Black Prince's Ruby, another stone of romance. It is not a ruby at all, but a large semi-precious balas or spinel, pierced by an old and inaccurate drill hole.

The ruby was acquired from the Moors by Pedro the Cruel, King of Castile, who gave it to the Black Prince, son of Edward III, in gratitude after the Battle of Najera in 1367. Henry V nearly lost it at the battle of Agincourt in 1415.

Beneath the ruby is the second largest cut diamond in the world, the 317 carats of the Second Star of Africa. In 1905, a worker at the Premier diamond mine in South Africa found a stupendous specimen measuring 5.1cm by 11.4cm by 6.4cm, and weighing 3,106 carats: it was the largest



St Edward's Crown is used once in each reign for the actual moment of coronation. Its stones are only semi-precious and are reset for each monarch



The Black Prince's Ruby is not a ruby but a spinel

diamond ever found and was called the Cullinan after the mine owner.

The company decided to present it to Edward VII on his 66th birthday. The problem was how to get it to London safely. Teams of couriers carried it by train and ship from the mine to London, aware that they were custodians of

an object of immense worth. They were not, in fact: the couriers were given a fake, while the real gem arrived safely in London by parcel post.

Splitting the monster was perhaps the most daunting task that ever faced a diamond cutter. It was eventually cut into nine major and 96 minor diamonds. The largest, the First Star of Africa, is the one in the head of the Sovereign's Sceptre. The Queen wears several of the other major stones as personal jewellery.

The Crown Jewels contain yet another of the world's greatest gems. The Koh-i-Noor ("Mountain of Light") is currently mounted in the platinum crown made for Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother to wear at her husband's coronation in 1937.

It was found in India in 1655. It was fought over by Persians and Afghans, and was presented to Queen Victoria by the East India

Company in 1850. In its original state it weighed 787 carats, but after a botched grinding job and recuts it is now only a much diminished 106 carats.

Other Crown Jewels have their imperfections. Queen Victoria's coronation ring was made specially for her unusually small fingers, but the confused jeweller made it to fit her little finger, when it was intended for the fourth finger of her right hand; the error was caused by the introduction into the jewellery trade of a new method denoting fingers.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, knowing that the ring was the wrong size, nevertheless insisted on jamming it on to Victoria's fourth finger at the height of her coronation. It took the new queen two hours and a lot of ice to get it off.

What are the Crown Jewels worth? The question is impossible, because their history is as important as their

intrinsic value. They are uninsured because no insurer could put a sensible figure on them, and anyway they are irreplaceable.

Strangely, there has only been one serious attempt to steal them. In 1671, Colonel Blood, an Irish renegade, got into the Tower disguised as a priest. There was a scuffle, during which Blood and two

accomplices made off with crown, orb and sceptre. But the plot was short-lived. Blood was overpowered at the East Gate of the Tower. For some reason never fully explained, he was pardoned by Charles II and even given a pension.

● To order *The Crown Jewels — The History of the Coronation Regalia* (published by HMSO in October) ring 0800 783 5962.

WIN THE CROWN JEWELS BOOK

READERS have a chance to win a copy of *The Crown Jewels*, worth £1,000. To enter, answer the following questions and send your answers, on a postcard please, to: The Crown Jewels Competition, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Entries must reach us by August 19. The winner will be announced on August 22. Normal *Times* competition rules apply.

- Which monarch had the Tower of London built?
- Which three Queens of England were executed there?
- What is the ceremonial evening locking of the Tower called?



LEFT Beautifully stitched and fastened with a single button, the soft pink Mary Jane shoes, £39, are more for special occasions than everyday larking about. Also available in navy, red, and white. Sizes 7-1. Call Rachel Riley (0171-259 5969). Mail order available

Shoe-be-doo

As a child, clip-clopping around in a pair of mother's high heels was the closest I ever got to wearing fashionable shoes. In those days you couldn't buy any for children so our feet were clamped into sensible brown numbers, which pinched and rubbed. Today, however, there are scores of well-designed, colourful and comfortable pairs that are practical enough to trudge through mud, splash in puddles and generally treat with the utmost disrespect.

CHILDREN'S SHOES

In fits and starts, Mr Croad advises going to a trained fitter at a shoe store to find out whether a child needs new shoes and to tell you which size fits properly. "Never buy shoes that are too big on the premise that the child will grow into them," he says. "It can result in 'claw toe', where a child clenches his toes for grip and as a result they do not grow correctly." Equally, if shoes are too small they can cause bunions, blisters and corns. "Also helpful," adds Mr Croad, "are shoes that have laces, straps or Velcro, as they will allow the pressure on the child's foot to be adjusted."

ABOVE These Peking flip-flops by Kangaroo, £15, have an extra thick foam sole to make tots taller and look more grown-up. Choose from blue or red gingham straps in sizes 10-5. From John Lewis (0171-629 7711)



ABOVE These navy and powder-blue leather shoes with pink flower, in sizes 3 to 6, come with a silver side buckle for easy adjustment. From Clarks branches nationwide (0990 785886)



This summer, thanks to the "Spice Girl" effect, says Steve Chin at Harrods, the trend has moved away from the Moschino mule, last year's favourite, and on to bright, sugared almond-coloured sandals with chunky platform heels. Boys, on the other hand, are still opting for the more practical lace-up dockside boat shoes, according to Carole Morris, manager of the shoe department at Trotters in London.

MARY ANN PERCY

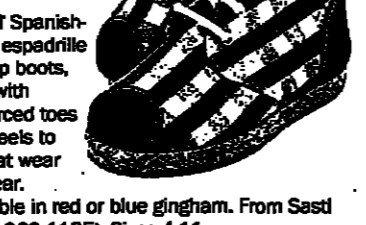


ABOVE Descamps' soft and snug booties, £14, in indigo cotton, come with jester pompons and fleecy lining in a handy carry bag. For babies up to six months old. Call 0171-235 6957



More important than the style of the shoe is the material and fit, says Hugh Croad of Clarks, the largest UK manufacturer of children's shoes. "If you want to be careful about the growth and hygiene of your child's feet, then leather is the only choice," he says. "Because leather is a natural material it absorbs sweat from the feet, unlike plastic which makes the feet sticky and smelly."

RIGHT Spanish-made espadrille lace-up boots, £18, with reinforced toes and heels to combat wear and tear. Available in red or blue gingham. From Sast (0181-960 1125). Sizes 4-11



RIGHT John Lewis (as before) has its own brand of peep-toe Daisy sandals, sizes 4-8, fastened with three miniature buckles. For £15, choose from fuchsia, blue or yellow



LEFT Fleecy-lined for little feet (0-36 months), Gel booties, £34, are 100 per cent cotton. In powder blue with red pompons and drawstring ties for a snug fit. From Descamps (as before)



RIGHT Irresistible in apple green patent leather and decorated with a red and yellow flower. Babybotte Jardin sandals, £32, from Sast (as before). From size 10



BELOW Soft-soled, button-strap slippers, £32-£34, from Rachel Riley (as before) with sand-coloured leather heels and cotton, leopard-print toes. Sizes 7-10

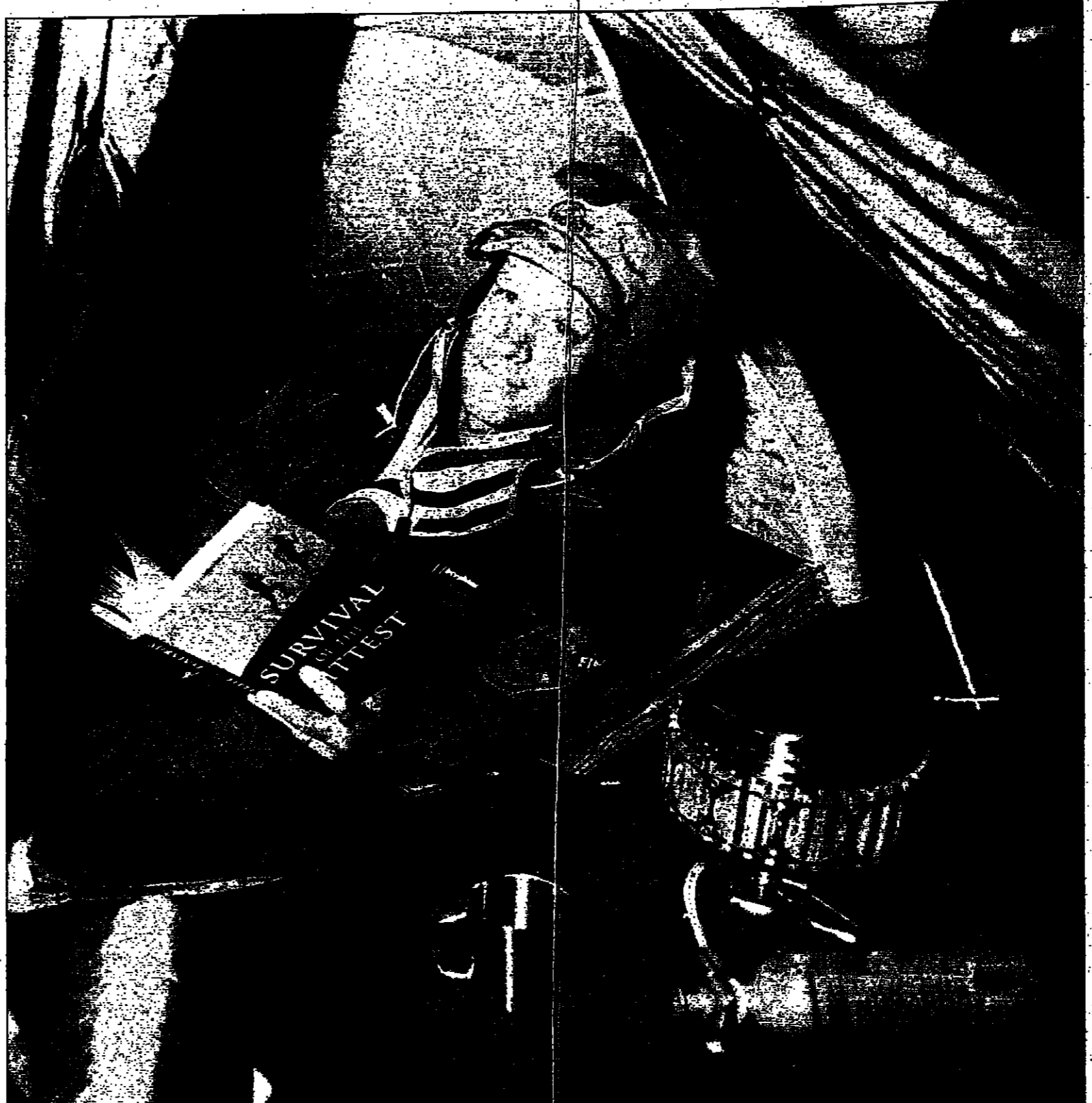


RIGHT No fuss cross-over sandals, £18, from Gap (0171-518 6300). Nylon uppers with a thick, wedgy, rubber sole in a choice of powder blue, black or white. Sizes 5-13



Photographs by Des Jensen

Dr Mike Stroud takes Lesley Downer to the shop where he gets his Arctic equipment



Dr Mike Stroud has been to the Arctic five times and the Antarctic three times. "It's like visiting another planet, stepping out of your life entirely"

I, like Dr Michael (Mike) Stroud, you've been to the Arctic five times and the Antarctic three times, the last time harnessed to a sledge pulling you, your possessions and three months' provisions along, you have a pretty clear idea of exactly what equipment you need and where to get it.

From ice picks to freeze-dried food

"You get very fond of your kit," he says, "and you have to take enormous care of it. You don't have spares for anything. When we started it was difficult to get all the supplies into the sleds. We had 485lb of stuff each to pack into these small shells."

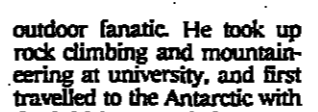
Blacks Outdoor is not so much Dr Stroud's favourite shop as his sponsor and supplier. Blacks was founded in 1853 by a sail-maker called Thomas Black and has sponsored adventurers since before the Second World War. The branch in Guildford specialises in equipping expeditions.

There are hefty rucksacks, down sleeping bags, Chariot Moser walking axes (ice picks to you and me), crampons, and fleecy jackets. Even so, Arctic and Antarctic explorers being thin on the ground, Black does not stock esoteric items such as ultra-long lightweight pegs for anchoring your tent in deep snow or Karrimor rucksacks with an in-built drinking system.

Obviously Dr Stroud can't just go shopping for his equipment. "Blacks have always supported our expeditions," he says simply. "I tell them what I want and they get it for me." (The rucksacks were tailor-made by Karrimor.)

Despite his awesome reputation as an adventurer and fitness expert, Dr Stroud, 43, is surprisingly small, slight, twinkly, and not remotely like Arnold Schwarzenegger. Ever since his father took him walking as a child, he has been an

my favourite shop



Blacks, which supplies Dr Stroud with his equipment

outdoor fanatic. He took up rock climbing and mountaineering at university, and first travelled to the Antarctic with the British Antarctic Survey as a doctor in 1980. Most famously, he spent three months making an unsupported crossing of the Antarctic with Sir Ranulph Fiennes in 1993. Both then wrote books describing, among other things, the spectacular rows which they had. It was not, he insists, a permanent falling-out.

"The polar region is like visiting another planet. You have an extraordinary opportunity to step out of your own life entirely and view it from the outside. The first 800 miles we travelled, no one had ever seen from the ground, no one had ever walked there. Not surprisingly, with the two of us alone together for 95 days, we sometimes had shouting matches. When I wrote the book, I didn't brush over the psychological difficulties. But we came back as friends. We're very good friends now."

Sir Ranulph also had plenty to say on the subjects of circumscription and frostbite. Dr Stroud (who is the circumscribed one of the pair) says: "We were doing scientific studies all the way across Antarctica which five times involved taking a 24-hour urine collection to see what was coming out. That involved peeing into a rather narrow-necked bottle in high winds at minus 50 degrees Celsius. I'd have thought it

would be easier for me. It was a tricky business and it did lead to some frost injuries in novel places."

Roaming around the shop, he stops to examine the rucksacks, tents, head torches, and freeze-dried food, then spots an old friend, a nondescript little MSR stove, like a single gas burner. "This is it, this is the key," he says, picking it up and handling it fondly. "It's incredibly simple, there's nothing to it, and incredibly efficient, especially if you're burning petrol."

odd occasion when you meet a polar bear. There were many nights in the Arctic, Dr Stroud remembers, when he and Sir Ranulph lay in their tent, listening to sounds outside which might have been ice crunching, or might have been a polar bear on the prowl.

"In the Arctic, it was so miserable, I have to admit—and I told Ran this—that I occasionally thought, 'How can I get out of this without losing face?' and decided, 'Well, I'll shoot him and say he fell in a crack. I don't think I ever came near to killing him, but bizarre ideas do cross your mind.'"

In the end, is it all worth it? "At the end of the day, each day, the last hour, when you knew you'd cracked another day and you were going to get to the tent, you would look around at the huge, empty sky and amazing mix of colours. It's not just white. As the sun gets lower, it goes orange and green and mauve. Glorious."

And without the little stove and all the above paraphernalia—all 485lb of it—it would be impossible to get there.

● **Blacks Outdoor**, 9-10, Phoenix Court, Guildford, Surrey GU1 3EQ (01483 30643). Open Mon-Sat, 9.30am-6pm.
● **Survival of the Fittest** by Mike Stroud, Jonathan Cape, £16.99.

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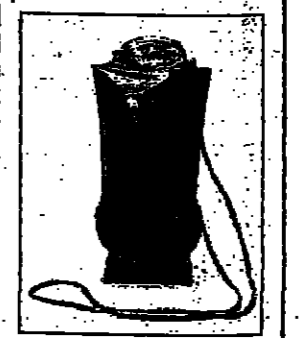
GADGETS

THE vogue for inflatable furniture has spawned a clutch of puffed-up peripheral items.

The Inflatable Chiller measures 10in in diameter and 10in high. Once blown-up, it will hold several bottles of wine, and generous handfuls of ice. Insulated side panels ensure the bucket stays cool for several hours. It packs flat.

The inflatable holder for sunglasses, below, is made from clear, blue plastic. The inner sleeve is made from a softer plastic. It has a carry cord attached. Perfect for boating types.

The inflatable holder for mobile phones, however, seems inherently flawed. Similar in looks



to the spectacles number, this is made from opaque plastic with a security flap at the top but it is not watertight. Surely when a mobile phone gets soaked it is unlikely to work properly again?

THE Orange digital mobile phone service has launched a pay-as-you-talk system. Just Talk. The volume can be turned up so loud you can make calls in Fort Telemont. Prepaid cards for 15, 60 or 240 minutes simply slot in. Even if the phone runs out of calling credits, it continues to receive calls for six months.

TIM WAPSHOTT

● **Inflatable Chiller**, £5 plus p&p, from Eddingtons (01483 666255). **Inflatable sunglasses and mobile phone holders**, £12.99 and £14.99 respectively, plus p&p, from Eddingtons (01483 666255). **Orange Just Talk** kit, £20.99, £19.99 (0800 801062)

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□ **Loud & Clear** takes the legwork out of present hunting. It will shrinkwrap anything from a heart-shaped hot-water bottle to a shower of confetti, then post it with a personalised gift tag. Ring 0171-247 4232.

□ **Contemporary Applied Arts** latest exhibition of contemporary pots taps into the trend for all things pure and simple. Cool, creamy ceramics by Rupert Spira, Edmund de Waal, Joanna Constantinidis et al are there until September 19. See them at 2 Percy Street, London W1 (0171-436 2344).

□ **L'Artisan Parfumeur's** mail-order catalogue arrives drenched in the scent of blackberries. Its own-label perfumes are irresistibly evocative. Send £5 and you'll get samples of five eaux de toilette. At 17 Cale Street, London SW3 (0171-352 4190).

□ **McArthur Glen**, the designer discount shopping village, is raising the profile of its Cheshire Oaks branch by opening a Donna

petrol gives the most heat for the least weight, but it can be dangerous in a tent. On two or three occasions in the Antarctic, it stove like this suddenly went up in flames. We'd change a bottle, and hadn't got it right, and it was leaking. Suddenly there'd be a huge whoof of flame. A fire in a sealed tent is no joke: the tent could be destroyed, and you'd be in trouble. So we'd rip open the door and throw it out of the tent. The only things we had to smother it with were our sleeping bags which we didn't want to destroy."

One thing which you can't get in Blacks is a gun, an essential piece of equipment for the

SHOP WATCH

Karen discount store. End-of-season men's and women's lines and sample stock are half price. Call 0151-348 5600.

□ **Boden**, whose wearable mail order clothes fill many a wardrobe, is adding a satellite accessory line. Velvet cushions, little notebooks, sponge bags and handbags in oranges, limes and lilacs will be available from late September, so beat the rush and call 0181-453 1535 to receive a catalogue.

□ **UPDATE: La Murrina**, just opened at 79 Ebury Street, London SW1 (0171-730 7922) has the cream of Venetian glass. Lulu Guinness, darling of the handbag world, opens her second shop next month in Chelsea. Ring 0171-221 9686 for details.

JUDITH WILSON

From





Moss and cream devoré chiffon wrap skirt, £225, subject to reduction in the sale, Whistles, 303 Brompton Road, SW3 (0171-487 4484). Pale beige stretch vest, £29, Malizia by La Perla (0171-436 5864). Turquoise blue silk embroidered scarf, £127, Camilla Ridley (mail order 0171-221 7329). Turquoise blue stone and gold drop necklace, £220, Van Peterson, 194-196 Walton Street, SW3 (0171-584 1101)



Rust crinkle silk wrap skirt, £55; cream marble handpainted silk scarf, £60, Dragana Perisic (mail order 0171-377 8602). Pale cream lace-trim stretch top, £29.99, Kookai, branches nationwide (0171-937 4411). Brown woven leather mules, £39.99, Jones Bootmaker (mail order and inquiries: 0800 163519)

From beach to barbie



ABOVE: Viscose wrap skirt, £110, in sale £35; vest, £39.95, in sale £19.95, Press and Basyan, 22 South Molton Street, W1 (01622 763211). Scarf, £153, Camilla Ridley, as before. Necklace (on arm), £120, Van Peterson, as before. RIGHT: Sarong, £17, East (mail order 0181-877 0807). Vest, £39, Whistles, as before. Shawl, £24, Elspeth Gibson, A La Mode, 36 Hans Crescent, SW3 (0171-277 5199). Earrings, £2.99, Top Shop, 214 Oxford Street, W1 (0171-291 2706)

When David Beckham walked out to dinner in the South of France recently wearing a vest and sarong, Britain roared. What was the man doing, the tabloids screamed. Real men don't wear skirts!

The footballer was not only following the example of millions of men worldwide — from African hunters to Asian monks — who wear the fabric because it is cheap, cool and comfortable. He was also copying millions of women who know that the sarong is not just an essential cover-up for the day, but a versatile accessory for the evening.

Also known as a pareo, kanga, lungi or kikoi, the sarong is now as important as a swimsuit for most holiday-makers. In the past three years, The Rack's annual turnover on sarongs has tripled to £1.5 million, and the range increased from the staple Tahitian prints (exotic fruits, flowers and birds that normally you wouldn't be seen dead in) to key styles and fabrics that complement this season's looks.

The high streets now stock simple but stylish short skirts in silk and cotton jersey, with matching tops for evening; long chiffon wraps that are floaty enough to keep you cool on the beach, yet sophisticated enough to dress up; and flimsy kikoi's that can be worn long in the day as a cover-up, and rolled up as a mini for that sunset stroll to the bar.

The fabric can also be put to more ingenious uses. Twist it and knot it and

— hey presto! — you have a strapless top; fold it and tie the corners to make a beach sack for books and suncreams; fold it and wrap it and you have a turban or a floaty bandana.

How you wear it is not only in the folding, but the fastening. The fabric does not have to be wrapped around the body like a bandage; drape it once around the waist, then fasten it at the front, for example, and you have a suggestive skirt. A knot at the side will ensure little flashes of leg, which can be enhanced for the evening with delicate summer sandals.

The beauty of the sarong is its versatility. The London designer Dragana Perisic says she often wears her sarongs in layers — a blue one beneath a violet one. Or, for evening, she will add an elaborate brooch and dress it up with a scarf and simple see-through vest.

On the catwalk, designers such as Giorgio Armani, Nicole Farhi, Ally Capellino and Ralph Lauren showed it with vests in the day, or dressed up with jackets for more formal occasions. Even Marks & Spencer now offers a version that has a matching beach bag for day, and gold-encrusted bandeau top for night.

David Beckham may not have got everything right on the pitch this season but when it comes to dressing on holiday, thousands of women would agree, the man really scored.

LISA GRAINGER



Short wrap skirt, £28, Mambo, 26-27 Carnaby Street, W1 (0181-741 2444). Double-layer vest, £75, Dragana Perisic, Malapa, 41 Clerkenwell Road, EC1 (0171-490 5229). Boob tube, £10, Marks & Spencer branches nationwide. Scarf, £127, Camilla Ridley, as before

THREE OF A KIND



For evening, accessorise elegant summer sarongs with delicate leather or diamanté thongs. LG

LEFT: Pink diamanté, £235, Gina, 189 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 2932)

MIDDLE: Black leather with tortoiseshell ring, £175, now £85.50 in sale, Jimmy Choo, 20 Motcomb Street, SW1 (0171-235 0242)

RIGHT: Black leather, £57.95, Bertie, 36 South Molton Street, W1 (0171-493 5033)

Photographs by ANNA STEVENSON Styling by Amandip Uppal Hair and make-up by Firyal Aracil Model: Marie Shot at Le Vieux Murier farmhouse, Provence, France (Bookings: 0131-256 3942) Car hire Hertz Europe (0990 996699)

Home delivery could do away with the Saturday shop. But does it work? Sarah Cunningham reports



Supermarkets are trying to take the boredom out of the weekly shop. Now food and wine will be delivered to your door, with no driving, no queuing and no carrying

Deliver us from shopping

You hardly have to go outdoors any more. You can have your luggage delivered from Next; your clothes from Marks & Spencer, which launches its second catalogue next week. Everything from furniture and wine to nappies and milk can be conjured effortlessly to the doorstep.

And now the shops are trying to take the boredom out of the bulkiest shopping of all: the weekly schlep to the supermarket and back. Of course, it is not as easy as it was a generation ago, when ordering groceries for delivery to your home was normal. You just phoned your local shop, read out your list, and waited for the shop's van, or a boy on a bicycle, to trundle along later in the day.

These days, ordering your groceries for home delivery has become a high-tech assault course. You can go on-line and order from Tesco's or Sainsbury's Internet sites, you can use a CD-Rom or you can fax. You can always try ordering by phone — just don't count on next-day delivery.

If you decide that it is worth having a go, the thing to bear in mind is that you are part of a gigantic experiment being carried out by the supermarket chains. They are each convinced that home delivery will become a significant part of their business, but they are not sure exactly when or how.

As with all experiments, things can go wrong. When they go right, the results can be bliss: bags full of fresh and frozen food, wine and anything else you want off the shelves, with no driving, no queuing and no carrying. When the process goes wrong, it can be every bit as frustrating as a Saturday morning haul around the supermarket, and it will have cost you up to £5 for the delivery.

Tesco was one of the first to start home shopping, but so far only offers the service at 12 of its London stores. A year ago, it was talking about offering Tesco Direct at all its stores within the M25, and then going nationwide, but it has since gone quiet and appears to be trying to iron out the glitches. The one thing that no supermarket wants to alienate its customers by offering a poor service.

When I rang to inquire about using



You can order your groceries on the Internet for home delivery, or you can fax or phone the store and then collect the food yourself later

Tesco Direct, I was told that I had to book the delivery some time in advance. For someone who is used to writing a shopping list ten minutes before setting off to the shop, this is hopeless. How can anyone know in advance what they will want for dinner in ten days' time?

A phone call to Harrod's got a more satisfying response. The Knightsbridge store sends a van to most parts of London twice a day. It charges £5, as long as your order is worth at least £20.

An alternative offered by both Sainsbury's and Tesco is ordering on the Internet. The good part about this is that there is a huge list of goods from which to choose. The bad part is that it can be complicated and time-consuming, particularly if, as too often occurs on the Internet, the screen freezes.

Sainsbury's, like Tesco, seem to be cooling on home shopping. Although

it is rolling out the service to 32 stores by next month, Dino Adriano, its chief executive, says that the take-up in the 17 stores where it is already available has been slow, and a nationwide service seems a distant prospect.

He cites American experts who once estimated that home delivery would account for 10 per cent of US sales, but this has been revised to 3 to 4 per cent. Safeway has a trial running at only one store, in Basingstoke, and offers "collect and go", where you order by fax or phone and then visit the store to pick up the prepared bags of shopping. Ian Mumbly, its director of business development, says: "The size delivery across the country is Iceland. Its success points to where the future lies, because it offers bulk buying of packaged goods with no fresh food."

But if you want a perfect piece of fish, or bananas that will last for several days, the best idea is to visit the supermarket and pick them yourself.

people who want to use the service are often those who are hardly ever at home. That means the most popular delivery times are weekends and evenings, when roads are still busy. Sweating van drivers turning up an hour or so late do not make for an attractive service.

In America, some chains provide customers with a locked fridge or freezer in their garages where goods can be left during the day. Another idea, being promoted in Britain by Waitrose, is to deliver groceries to people at their offices. Both seem to have limited appeal.

One store to watch for in the future is Asda, which is putting £3 million into building the first of a series of delivery depots, and is also looking at running its own satellite television channel dedicated to home shopping. The only chain to offer food home delivery across the country is Iceland. Its success points to where the future lies, because it offers bulk buying of packaged goods with no fresh food.

But if you want a perfect piece of fish, or bananas that will last for several days, the best idea is to visit the supermarket and pick them yourself.

"Stores can no longer count on a person to be home to take delivery"



You can order your groceries on the Internet for home delivery, or you can fax or phone the store and then collect the food yourself later

HOME SHOPPING

- Asda Internet site www.asda.co.uk Home delivery being launched next year.
- Marks & Spencer Internet site www.marks-and-spencer.co.uk Home delivery from 22 stores. Charge £5. Direct delivery on wine (£4 extra) and flowers (£3.50 extra).
- Safeway Direct delivery on flowers (charge included in price).
- Sainsbury's Internet site www.sainsbury.co.uk Home delivery (orderline 0845 301202) £5 charge to home, £3.50 if collected from store. Direct delivery on flowers and chocolate (no extra charge).
- Tesco Internet site www.tesco.co.uk Home delivery trialled in London.
- Waitrose Internet site www.waitrose.co.uk Home delivery aimed at companies at present — food can be ordered by computer. No charge but minimum order is £5. Direct delivery on wine, beer, flowers.

PORTIA COLWELL

Drink



Jane MacQuitty

Brighten up a disappointing summer by tracking down a few of the best bargains around

August means plenty of wine sale offerings for those who can sniff out a bargain in a bottle. The wine trade is not having a great time at present, due to a combination of World Cup watchers, who mostly drink beer (and in vast quantities), and our poor summer weather.

Sainsbury's maintains it has bucked the trend, but for most, unless this month brings a late recovery, the shelves will remain awash with dry whites, light reds and pinks that will not sell.

Caveat emptor is still the motto of everyone on the hunt for a cut-price bottle or two. It is astonishing how wine merchants polish up the old chestnuts in their sales literature. Adams (The Crown, High Street, Southwold, Suffolk, 01502 777222) really should be ashamed of itself for trying to

(£10.10), is a must-buy on its slightly discounted summer wine offer. So, too, are the magnificent Domaine Weinbach wines from Alsace; try the 1996 Cuvée Laurence Gewürztraminer (£17.70).

J&B's burgundies are the best, so bargains such as the '96 Mâcon-Üchizy from Domaine Talmard is a decent, buttery £6.45 worth, as is Tolle-Beaur's upfront, spicy '94 Chorey-Lès-Beaune (£10.40). J&B's mixed summer cases offer the best value for money, and six bottles each of the delicious 1996 Chablis Fourchaume, ter Cru (£12.95) from J-M Brocard and the 1994 Château Tour de Marchesau, Lalande de Pomérol at £8.95 are worth considering.

For quality and quantity, the only two sales to consider now are those of Lay & Wheeler and Bibendum. L&W of Colchester (Gosbecks Park, Colchester, 01206 76446) continues to do an impressive job of buying everything and anything worth drinking. So tuck in to the likes of the rich, hazelnut 1985 Dom Pérignon, down £8 to £71.95, half-bottles such as the new-wave Montagne St Emilion, the 1994 Château de Musset for £3.98 and Henschke's floral 1996 Sauvignon-Semillon blend (£6.95). L&W's joint on its bread and butter is the list of cut-price burgundy and claret that — in view of the inflated '97 Bordeaux prices — is worth combing through: I would not say no to the 1985 Palmer, down £11.57 to £49.50, or to the 1989 La Lagune, down £6.16 to £29.50.

The sale list of Bibendum (113 Regent's Park Road, London NW1, 0171-916 7706) eclipses L&W's. But again, give the Lucky Dip cases a wide berth.

Instead, find instant summer gratification with Hidalgo's Manzaniella La Giarra, down £1 to £4.90, and Fontmayne's only drinkable champagne, the detectable 1988 Louise Fontmayne, down £12-plus to £50.50 a bottle.

Top-drawer French classics are what the dedicated wine sale sleuth will go for. My top tip goes to Rolly Gassmann's fine, spicy Alsace wines and the long run of '90s and '80s burgundies, especially Luc-Camus Bruchon's Savigny-Lès-Beaune '92 and '93 vintages of white and old vine reds, down £2.50 each to £9.50.

And take a chance on label-damaged clarets such as '83 Palmer, down £12-odd to £75. Not a summer steal, but a treat all the same.

At Justerini & Brooks (61 St James's Street, London, SW1, 0171-493-8721), JJ Prüm's glorious 1995 Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Kabinett

Next week: Mixed drinks

THE DRINKS THAT TIME FORGOT

Kia-ora orange

THE MINORS' matinee of my youth seemed strangely frozen in the 1940s. Flash Gordon made regular appearances, alongside more contemporary adventures such as the Double Deckers, all pursuing villains and treats of pro-war vintage. And what treats they were, temptingly proffered in kaleidoscopic glory. The minor with enough moolah could choose from a choice of nuts, a rubbery "hot-dog" in a stale bun, perhaps a square lump of something we were happy to call "ice-cream" — unwrapped and placed between two wafers — or why not try... a Kia-ora?

This exotic-sounding product (Kia-ora is in fact Maori for "G-day") was the same orange "squash" you got at home, essentially orange water but with a blinding dose of tarrazine, added sweetener which left a metallic after-taste in the mouth, and a horde of hyperactive monsters for the cinema staff to deal with. If memory



A drink slurped noisily in the cinema

Stouges or who was too poor to be enjoying their own Kia-ora. A Kia-ora holds up well in what is left of the "ditatables" market but the cinema catering scene thinks it has moved on, with "Big" "Super" and "mega-gulp" portions of Dr Peppers and the like to wash down the Ben & Jerry's or preposterous buckets of popcorn. If you can find an outlet, cardboard packs of the unlikely survivor can still be purchased, ready to drink and with a straw for all you suckers out there in the dark.

KATE STRONACH

HENRY HARRIS'S CHEAT OF THE WEEK

WHEN I was a student at Leith's School of Food and Wine we were regularly told that it was safe to assume that if cooking in someone else's kitchen they wouldn't have the equipment you'd need. As an example, we were given a roasting tray and pudding basin to use as a double-boiler and in that we had to make hollandaise sauce, stirring in hard butter with a wooden spoon.

This also taught me to appreciate the kitchen gadget. In an under-resourced kitchen it is amazing what you can come up with. Pastry chefs are particularly inventive.

My favourite (it is said that I get such pleasure from this) is cutting a panel out of a plastic milk carton, trimming it down to a kidney shape with a pair of scissors and voila, a perfect scraper.

and blackberries, leave for an hour, then serve.

4. Keep the corks, slice them into rounds and use them to stabilise wobbly table legs and chairs.

5. An empty claret bottle filled with water and sealed can be used as a weight to press a terrine when it comes out of the oven.

6. If you can't find the rolling-pin use a claret bottle.

7. Reduce a cheap bottle of grenache, a clove, a piece of cinnamon bark and 200g of sugar to a syrup and stir into a litre of vanilla ice-cream. Churn in the freezer for a red wine ice-cream.

8. If red wine is corked, don't bin it. Take four braising steaks, cover with sliced onion and pour the wine over, add a splash of olive oil and marinate for 24 hours before making a casserole.

9. Deglaze a roasting pan with a splash of red wine, whisk in mustard, crème fraîche and olive oil for a warm salad dressing.

10. Combine 200ml each of red wine, port and veal stock and reduce down to 200ml, stir in one teaspoonful of cracked peppercorns and drizzle over water-thin slices of raw Scottish beef along with a little olive oil for an exquisite carpaccio.

Henry Harris is head chef at the Fifth Floor, Harvey Nichols, London



STAR BUYS

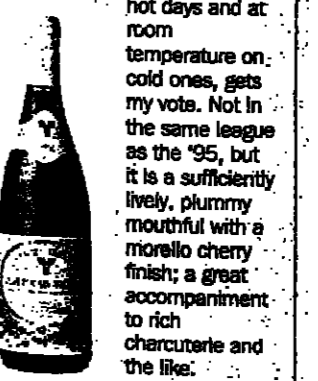
Bressault Brut Champagne, F. Bressault, Fellers, down £2 to £9.99 until Sept 14 only.

1996 Beaujolais-Villages, Georges Dubouff, Fellers, £4.99 or buy two for £4.49 each.

I have been waiting all summer for Fellers to reduce the price of this, the best value-for-money champagne in the high street, and at last it has. Unlike Bressault's trimy, skinny, lacklustre competition, what you get is lots of glorious, freshly baked brioche finesse, supported by a fine, ripe, heady-musky palate. Not the best bottle of champagne I have ever tasted but still surreals ahead of similarly priced supermarket offerings.



Mixed August weather — torrid one day, teaming down the next — means planning wine selections carefully. This summery, all-weather red, which can be served chilled on hot days and at room temperature on cold ones, gets my vote. Not in the same league as the '95, but it is a sufficiently lively, plummy mouthful with a morello cherry finish; a great accompaniment to rich character and the like.



BEST OF THE REST
Other first-rate Fellers deals available until September 14 include Bidoli's crisp, green 1997 Sauvignon-Picote, down 76p to £3.99. Or there are multi-buy deals such as Bidoli's 1997 Pinot Grigio Picote (buy two, save 50p on each, down to £4.29). Also try Parrier Jouët's fruity vintage champagne for the same price as non-vintage, down £5 to £18.99.

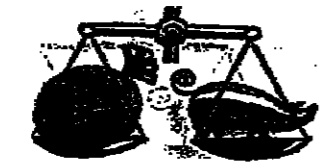
The Times Cook

The pleasures of home cooking are even greater when fresh organic produce is delivered to your door

With a little organisation, you hardly need to go shopping at all. Mineral water, wine, household goods, organic fruit and veg, meat and fish are just some of the items that can be delivered to your home. This is done either by mail order or by special arrangement, not to mention the newer online systems being tried out by supermarkets. Look too, at the local directories pushed through the letterbox, as well as the Yellow Pages.

Even those like me, who enjoy shopping, would be stretched to find in a butcher's shop meat of the quality you can buy direct from the farm. There are perhaps one or two notable exceptions: Waitrose, for example, has introduced organic meat to its fresh meat selection.

I have never tasted better pork than that from the Middle White pig, now classified as a rare breed. I first became acquainted with it when filming at Heal Farm in north Devon, where Anne Petch rears a small herd of all the rare breeds of British pigs.



Recently I had some Middle White from Richard Vaughan of Pedigree Meats of Herefordshire. This particular breed is highly prized by the Japanese, who are willing to pay the equivalent of about £60 a kilo for Middle White pork, which makes it even more unfortunate that we have allowed stocks in Britain to dwindle to no more than 200 registered sows.

In an effort to create a market for this excellent meat, and that from rare native breeds of sheep and beef cattle, the Rare Breeds Survival Trust has approved a number of butchers permitted to sell this meat, and produces a list of them.

Mr Vaughan does not have large quantities of Middle White for sale at any one time and a minimum of half a carcass must be purchased, which makes this an ideal way for a group of friends or neighbours to buy meat. The cuts are beautifully prepared and vacuum-packed. The

shoulder is one of my favourite joints, as its marbling of fat ensures it cooks to a tender succulence. And the depth of flavour of Mr Vaughan's pork is very fine.

I have roasted it, cooked it in a pot with rice and oriental spices, and made goulash. The chops are delicious for a quick weekday meal. I added the trotters to a *poulet au pot*, which produced a lovely rich broth. The bonus came the next day, when I brought the trotters to room temperature, allowing me to prise them apart, brush them with melted butter, roll them in fresh breadcrumbs and bake them. They were excellent with mashed potatoes, pickles and mustard.

Whenever I make goulash, I prepare more than I need so there will be enough for soup later in the week. But this time I made a filling for soft tacos. I shredded the pork and released it in its sauce, together with a generous splash of Tabasco and a heaped tablespoon of chopped fresh coriander.

The flour tortillas were wrapped in foil and heated, then served with the pork and cream cheese, shredded iceberg lettuce and home-made guacamole. For the goulash, use Hungarian paprika for authenticity, choosing one of the sweet ones rather than fiercely hot ones, since what is important is the colour; the hot paprika can be used in place of the chilli or cayenne. Since I do not like caraway seeds, I substitute dill seeds.

Nothing, by the way, is more guaranteed to change the weather than goulash in August.

As a first course before a big meat dish, try a dark green salad full of peppery, spicy flavour from mizuna, watercress, radishes and rocket. Mizuna, a member of the brassica family originally from Japan, is grown widely in Britain, often included in mixed bags of baby salad greens and in organic vegetable boxes.

If you are serving pigs' trotters, you might prefer a soup first. This is an easy recipe, which you can adapt to whatever herbs and vegetables are available. When the weather is warm, a chilled potato and basil soup is very good indeed.

Potato and potato soup
Serves 4
2 potatoes, peeled and chopped
1 onion, peeled and chopped

1tbsp sunflower oil
100g or large bunch flat-leaf parsley
Approx 1.25l vegetable, or light chicken stock
Handful of fresh herbs, such as chives, chervil and sorrel
Salt
Freshly ground black pepper
3 to 4tbsp yoghurt or single cream (optional)

FRY THE potato and onion gently in the oil without browning. Rinse, drain and chop the parsley and add most of it to the pot. Add 150ml stock and cook until the vegetables are soft. Add half the herbs and allow

to cool, add remaining herbs and parsley and make a purée in a blender or food processor. Sieve and stir in remaining stock. Reheat, season to taste and, if using, stir in the yoghurt or single cream. This soup is also good chilled.

Peppery leaf salad with blue cheese dressing
Serves 6
1 bunch or bag of watercress
4 good handfuls of leaves of spinach, rocket and mizuna
1 or 2 bunches of radishes, trimmed and well rinsed
75g blue cheese, crumbled and at room temperature

Grating of nutmeg
2tbsp plain yoghurt or buttermilk

HEAP THE rinsed and dried leaves in a salad bowl. Thinly slice the radishes and add to the bowl. To make the dressing, simply blend the cheese and yoghurt, or buttermilk, thinning with extra milk, or water if you prefer a thinner texture. Season with pepper and pour it over the salad just before serving.

Pork Goulash
Serves 4 plus leftovers
1.5kg pork shoulder
2 large onions, peeled and cut into wedges
1tbsp grape-seed oil

2tbsp sweet paprika
1tbsp flour
Pinch of chilli powder, cayenne pepper or hot Hungarian paprika
1tsp dill seeds
150ml pork or chicken stock
330ml dry cider or decent red wine
Salt
Pepper

FRY THE onions in the oil in a flame-proof casserole until golden brown. Remove and put to one side. While the onions are cooking, remove the skin and fat from the meat, then carefully separate the skin from the fat. Discard the fat or render and use as lard. Cut the meat into cubes and brown them in the oil. Sprinkle on the paprika, flour, chilli and dill, and stir in well. Pour on a little stock and add the rest of the stock, cider or wine and the pork skin.

Bring to the boil, cover, and simmer gently for two to two-and-a-half hours, seasoning after an hour. Sometimes potatoes are peeled, cut up and added to the stew half an hour before serving; you might serve the goulash with potatoes, noodles or dumplings. I served mine with potatoes mashed with finely chopped fennel tops.

To make a goulash soup from the leftovers, cut up the meat into smaller pieces, together with any potatoes. Put them in a saucepan, together with gravy and stock — 500ml will serve two. Stir well, bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Serve with soured cream and chopped fresh dill.

Frances Bissell



THE PERFECT SALMON TARTARE

THIS is an easy first course, best made just before it is served. Be careful not to overdo the lemon or lime juice, as this will change the texture of the fish, when all you want to do is season it.

INGREDIENTS: for four people, 400-500g wild salmon fillet, skinned, a shallot peeled and finely chopped, two tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, seasoning to taste, dash of lime or lemon juice, 1 cucumber, 1 teaspoon grated horseradish and 1 tablespoon cream.

METHOD: Chop the salmon into small pieces. Add the shallot, olive oil, seasoning and citrus juice. Cover and put to one side. Peel and halve the cucumber, remove the seeds, roughly chop and put in a blender or food processor with the horseradish and cream. Blend until smooth and season to taste.

TO SERVE: Spoon on to plates, or shape using ring moulds. Spoon the sauce around it, and add chervil or flat-leaf parsley for decoration.

ALTERNATIVE: Very fresh mackerel and tuna can be prepared in the same way.

Next week: *The perfect pear sorbet*



Summer berries and almond crumble

Serves 4 to 6

About 1kg summer berries, such as you might use for summer pudding, topped and tailed as appropriate
100ml red wine
Unrefined sugar to taste
100g flour
75g unsalted butter
50g ground almonds
50-75g light muscovado sugar
25g flaked or ribbed almonds

SIMMER the wine for five minutes, then add the fruit, cook for five minutes more and sweeten to taste. Transfer the fruit to individual buttered ramekins or a larger

baking dish, removing the vanilla. Rub the butter and flour together, stir in the ground almonds and sugar and the flaked almonds. Spoon the crumble over the fruit and bake at 200C, gas mark 6 for 15 minutes. Serve with a custard sweetened with elderflower syrup or with cream, yoghurt or ice-cream.

Pedigree Meats of Herefordshire, 01600 89236, fax 01600 892392; Rare Breeds Survival Trust, 01203 696551; Heal Farm, meat and country food, King's Nympston, Umberleigh, Devon, EX37 9TB (01769 54341). For a list of organic vegetable box schemes, contact the Soil Association, 86 Colston Street, Bristol BS1 5SB.

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Next week: *Grouse for a treat*

CONSUMING INTEREST: OWN BRAND CARBONATED WATER

NOT CARING for fizz and perfectly happy with my London tap water, I would not usually drink carbonated mineral or spring water. It does, though, have the advantage that the added carbon dioxide inhibits bacterial growth, which can produce disquietingly high levels of

bacteria in bottled still water. Almost all the mineral waters on sale have a "low" mineral content (51 to 500mg/l total). I would prefer glass to plastic bottles for water that is to be stored, as plastic quickly produces off-flavours, in my experience. **ROBIN YOUNG**



Safeway Glencairn Spring Sparkling, 56p for 1-litre glass bottle

Claims: "Scottish carbonated natural mineral water. The carbonated natural mineral water has acquired a well-balanced mineral content through filtration in the volcanic rock strata, producing a particularly pure quality of water."
Verdict: 9mg/l sodium and 3mg/l nitrate. Peaceable carbonation, producing an acceptable display of bubbles. Flavour distinctly chemical. *

Vichy Catalan Gennina, £1 for 1-litre glass bottle from Harvey Nichols

Claims: "Authorised for public use on 5th March 1883. Mineral medicinal water from the Vichy Catalan spring, carbonated." The label reproduces six medals awarded 1884 to 1929.
Verdict: Aggressive carbonation with short-lived sparkle. Unmistakably salty flavour. The analysis is given in unhelpfully abbreviated form, but the principal ingredient is evidently sodium bicarbonate (1125mg/l of sodium and 2013mg/l of bicarbonate), while apparently there is no nitrate at all. It might be good for boiling carrots. *

Morrisons Sparkling Spring Water, 39p for 2-litre PET bottle

Claims: "The obvious choice. Quality and value."
Verdict: 22mg/l sodium and 18mg/l nitrate. Heavily carbonated, though the gas came away in a rush leaving little effervescence, with a hint of sharpness and bite. **

Tesco Sparkling Perthshire Mountain Spring Carbonated Natural Mineral Water, 75p for 2-litre PET bottle

Claims: "Bottled for Tesco at source, Blackford, Perthshire, Scotland. A clear and pure water renowned for its taste and mineral content. Suitable for a low-sodium diet. Calorie free."
Verdict: 12mg/l of sodium and 15mg/l of nitrate. Loose, whooshy carbonation. Slightly earthy flavour. *

Asda Stretton Hills Sparkling, 58p for 2-litre PET bottle

Claims: "Carbonated natural mineral water from Shropshire. Clearly refreshing. Composition in accordance with the results of the officially recognised analysis of the 11th December 1967. Stretton Hills natural mineral water has a pure refreshing taste, drunk on its own, with meals or as a mixer."
Verdict: 13.3mg/l of sodium and 15.6mg/l of nitrate. Very

light carbonation. Neutral flavour, in accordance with a generally low mineral content. ** *

Gleneagles Carbonated Natural Mineral Water Sparkling, £1.99 for 75cl glass bottle, from Selfridges

Claims: "Bottled at source by the Gleneagles Spring Waters Company, Perthshire."
Verdict: The fancy conical glass bottle carries a logo "beneath the rainbow", but no analysis. If you want to get that you would apparently have to e-mail the company. Silky texture, mildly citric flavour. ** *

St Michaels Sparkling Spring Water Carbonated, 55p for 1.5-litre PET bottle

Claims: "Bottled at source in Eire."
Verdict: Blue-tinted bottle looked attractive but disgraced itself by wetting my trousers when I opened it. Very short-lived bubbles. Some citric and bicarbonate flavour. 13mg/l of sodium and 23mg/l of nitrate. *

Waitrose Scottish Mineral Water Carbonated, 55p for 1-litre glass bottle

Claims: "A carbonated natural mineral water from a natural water source situated on high ground on Stirlingshire's Campsie Fells... low in sodium and nitrates."
Verdict: 13.9mg/l of sodium and 5mg/l of nitrate. The well-balanced carbonation provided a reasonably long-lived sparkle. Smooth texture and satisfying hint of flavour. ** *

MORE FOOD & DRINK IN the times magazine
Jonathan Meades at Mash plus the battle between tea and coffee

Gloves off in the kitchen

HOME COOKING

Frank Bruno might do damage in the ring, but his mother is the heavyweight in the kitchen, writes Ivo Tennant

Frank Bruno, the former World Heavyweight Boxing champion turned entertainer, was such a lively child that he abandoned his cot when he was but ten months old. "He got out of it like mad," according to his mother, Linette, "and then he ate everything. I cannot remember him not liking any kind of food. I was a keen cook and put lots on the table for my children to take what they wanted."
Mrs Bruno, who is now 66, arrived in England from Jamaica in 1958. She brought up six children single-handedly in Wandsworth, South London, after her husband, Robert, a bakery worker, died of diabetes at the age of 46, when Frank was 16. "Parents have to try to look after their children," she says. "I was young then and had plenty of energy. In those days it was possible to find shops selling West Indian food such as yams, bananas and fried plantain if you knew where to go."
"Frank has always been easy to feed. I would prepare chicken, curried goat, baked beans, eggs, steak, cornmeal porridge, oats porridge, green banana porridge, which is a Jamaican speciality, ackee and saltfish. He would drink carrot juice and gooseberry juice. When they were small, none of my children was allowed in the kitchen, but they would come in for a snack if they got hungry."

Mrs Bruno was a strict mother. "I never allowed my children to go out on their own. I could not have them getting into trouble. Frank liked having friends round, but I liked to vet them. I was particular about the people he mixed with and he keeps in touch with some of them. He was keen on sport, but would irritate the neighbours by kicking his ball over the fence. Jumping over to retrieve it would cause friction, so he would go round to get it."

In the holidays, Mrs Bruno would take her children to the seaside, to Southend, Margate or Hastings. Rather than buy provisions there — they did not eat much in the way of seafood — she would prepare a sizeable hamper. "Frank had pocket money from a young age and we did buy chips and sausages, Lucozade, Ribena and Cola, but the West Indian way is to take our own picnic."

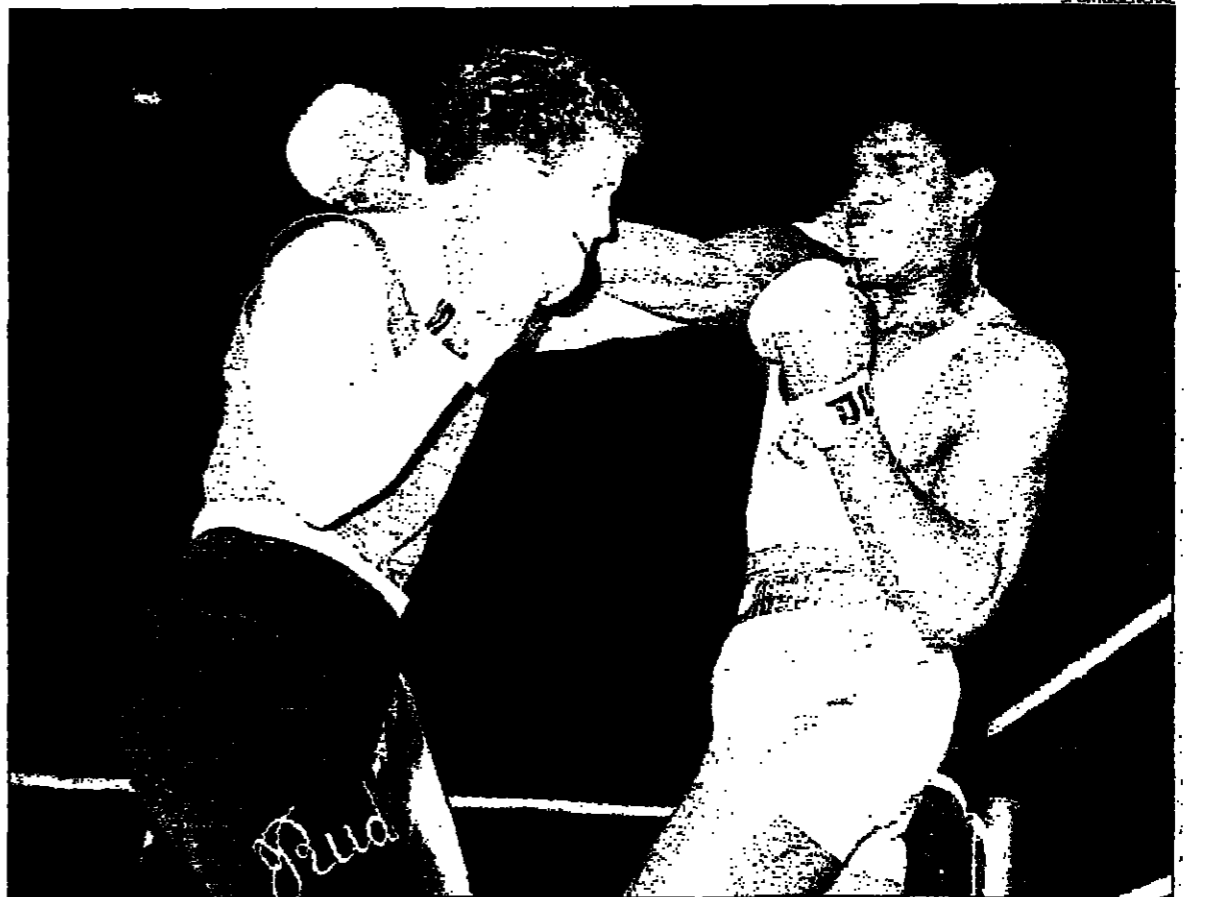
She would take her children to church, which Frank still attends, and to Sunday school. His energy, though, was unquenchable, and at the age of 11 he was expelled from Swaffield primary school, Wandsworth, for wrestling a teacher to the floor. He was sent to a corrective boarding school, Oak Hall in Sussex, where he learned to box. His mother followed his considerable career with great pride thereafter.

Mrs Bruno sold her five-bedroomed house when her children left and now lives on her own in Norbury, also in South London. She visits Frank and his wife at their luxurious home in Hornchurch, Essex. "Laura is a good

cook and they have a housekeeper and helper now, so she does not have to do very much in the kitchen," she says. "Frank does not have a lot of time, but he pops in to see me and asks if I could cook such and such a dish," Mrs Bruno says. She keeps herself active through her duties as an evangelist at the Church of God Worldwide Mission in Fulham, and through other voluntary work. She was too busy to follow the coverage of the anniversary of the arrival of the first West Indians to come to England from Jamaica on the *Empire Windrush*. But when Frank rings up to say he is coming round, there is only one activity that absorbs her: cooking his favourite dish — curried goat.



Linette Bruno in her Norbury home where she now lives alone



Frank Bruno in the ring as an amateur; here he is fighting Rudi Pika in the 1980 ABA finals at Wembley

Joanna Pitman



Getting the wind up takes on a whole new meaning with calorie-counting

With plans afoot to head for Italy in late August, we began the long and arduous process of obtaining a passport for Alice. Of course, it merely takes a nod and a wink for her to be grafted on to one of our passports. But, oh no: that would be too easy. She may want to travel with either of us, we insisted; or even one day with a grandparent. The first thing to do was to register her birth. Then I had to go to a central post office to get a B form — B for Babies, presumably. Once that was completed in all its heavy legalese, it was photograph time. Bravely ignoring the rash of angry spots all over Alice's cheeks, we sped off to a photo booth, whereupon we struck a problem. How to get Alice but not me in the photo? After a practice run and a devilish

piece of maternal contortion, we got four shots of Alice held up like a rag doll, shoulders up somewhere around her ears, staring bewildered at the camera, with a grown-up chin laughing in the background. It is a classic example of the sack-of-potatoes look. Poor Alice will have to suffer this one until she is five years old.

● AN IMPORTANT bonus of breastfeeding is that mothers are encouraged to eat gross quantities of high-calorie food. Cream cakes daily, thick banana milkshakes, a disgusting amount of creamy cheeses, avocados, masses of potatoes, oily pastas, buttery risottos, legs of lamb, platters of salmon, sausages, steak-and-kidney pies, egg yolics and bacon fat, dished it up and ate my portion in a matter of minutes. Giles was only halfway

4,000 calories a day. Unsure which foods have what calorific content, Giles has bought a slimming bible and we are using it in reverse, as it were, concentrating on all the banned substances. And I am still hungry. A few nights ago I put together a really evil spaghetti carbonara cooing with cream, cheese, egg yolics and bacon fat, dished it up and ate my portion in a matter of minutes. Giles was only halfway

through his by the time I was back in the kitchen cooking up another meal of it.

I have a brother who once ate 51 roast potatoes on the trot in a rag week contest, and then beat his own record the following year by eating 29 individual rhubarb crumbles, so I suppose gluttony has been in the genes all along. Certain foodstuffs, however, are best avoided — onions, leeks, baked

beans, Jerusalem artichokes ... you get the picture. Wind, it appears, can travel in milk.

● CONTINUING OUR perambulator adventures, Alice test drove her grandparents' historic pram last weekend. Black and shiny, ancient and venerable, and with a secret compartment under the mattress for nanny's sandwiches, it is known in the family as The Coffin.

No longer need Alice look enviously upon her cousins' American electric blue three-wheeler jogging pushchair. This is a real carriage pram for sedate tours. In a trice Alice had changed into her best smocked nightie, settled herself in state with her bear and set off with Giles to tour the village, surveying the scene and waving her fingers regally at passers by. The Coffin handled beautifully. It turned on a sixpence and managed something like 0-5mph in ten seconds. Alice loved her tour but Giles was disappointed to discover that the local tradition of showering a new baby with silver coins has fallen into decay.

● ALICE ALSO met a large crowd of her big cousins at the weekend. Quickly realising that she holds the title as newest, smallest and temporarily most popular, she picked out two eager helpers as her handmaidens. Sophie, aged ten, who shares a birthday, has been selected after gruelling tests as chief bath assist-

ant. And Jamie, 12, has been taken on as valet and deputy nappy changer. Following his new appointment, Jamie has dropped his ambition to become a butler and now wants to be a maternity nurse when he grows up.

● IT IS amazing how many people who come and see us are already talking about "when you have your next one ...". What with all this eating, producing milk, leaping out of bed in the middle of the night and all the rest of it, I am not remotely interested in twinkles in eyes until way into the next century. The sister of a friend of mine, however, is soon to have her "next one". The other day she took her two-year-old son aside and asked him if he thought it would be a boy or a girl. He thought for a long time and then declared: "A girl."

"What shall we call her?" the mother asked. The boy thought for a long time. Finally he announced: "Birdbath."

The short life and long death of Ratsputin

Smelling a rat is easy, finds Liz Gill, but eliminating it is a little harder

I shall put you down for a rat," says George, the council's pest control man. He eyes Monty the cat sternly. "You ain't doing your job, mate." George has been called in to deal with the creature living in our kitchen. A creature evidenced only by droppings and debris in one corner, and a lot of crouching and tail lashing by the cat.

George slides poisoned seed on a piece of newspaper under the cooker.

"If it's a rat, it'll eat the lot. If it's a mouse, it'll leave the husks," he says.

Over tea he regales me with stories of gruesome infestations — "this rat what put its head out of the toilet bowl while the woman was lying in the bath".

During the next fortnight the mystery deepens. Some days there are signs; some days there are not. And never a sound. Not a squeak, not a scurble.

But there is a definite whiff in the corner. We discover new droppings in the room next to the kitchen. And they look bigger.

We put more poisoned seed in this second site. Two days later, some husks gone and there's a scattering of husks; the creature's days are numbered. Two days later the signs are back.

George says the droppings look increasingly rat-like but the behaviour doesn't.

"Rats are too noisy, too clumsy. The last time I had a mystery like this," he adds, "it was a hamster."

The children are thrilled. "Can we keep it as a pet?" they say.

He decides on a belt-and-braces approach: rat poison, mouse poison, a rat trap, a mouse trap — The Nipper and Little Nipper respectively — and a live trap.

"Though if you get 'em in there they go mad, so mad you sometimes have to shoot 'em."

None of it works. We take off the fascia below the cupboards to find chewed newspaper and polystyrene and a billion droppings.

The Creature has acquired mythical status in our household — it is resilient, resourceful and seemingly anorexic. It laughs at traps; it sneaks poisoned titbits; it cocks a snook at cats.

I keep a rolling pin on the draining board, but more out of bravado than serious intent.

Then one day the poison is gone, every last grain. Three days and it'll be dead.

Monty decides to have a night in and we leave him some dried cat food. In the morning the food has been transferred from under the cat's nose, to beneath the

RAT STATS

There are more rats than people in the UK. They breed prolifically, producing three to five litters a year. "Because they interbreed indiscriminately," says Tony Stephens of Rentokil, "if you put a male and female in a cage with enough food and water, at the end of a year you could have a thousand rats."

"Their teeth are the hardest known animal substance. They eat absolutely anything," he says. "They don't grow as big as cats, and they won't spring at your throat if cornered. They aren't good jumpers because their eyesight is poor."

"But a rat will defend itself and can bite through bone — so it's not a good idea to try and grab one. If you do get bitten and the rat's hanging on, rather than trying to shake it off put it down on the floor and it will run off. They are more nervous of you than you are of them."

cupboard. Not bad for something in its death throes.

We know now that we are dealing with Ratsputin.

The following day my son appears at the bedroom door early. "There's a rat on the kitchen floor," he says. "dead."

I steel myself and open the door. The rat is stretched out on the tiles. I take a picture of it.

Apart from its tail, which repulses me, it seems a dear little fellow. It has tiny pale pink paws and a sheen on its coat and it looks, well, clean and rather sweet. Its eyes are small brown beads and suspiciously bright. It is still breathing.

I invert a bucket over it. The tail pokes out of the side. Disgusting.

I fill another bucket with water and carry it outside. Then I drag the inverted bucket towards the step, drop the rat on to a dustpan and throw it in the water. There is a brief squeak, the only sound we have ever heard it make.

Panic-stricken that it will revive and scramble out, I bang a heavy metal tray on top of the bucket. I am sweating and trembling. My son has continued to chomp his Coco Pops and read the sports pages.

I dig a hole in the garden and pour in the contents of the bucket. The water takes a long time to drain away and the rat floats, his coat wet and dirty now and repellent, as a rat's should be.

I shovel the earth in and wipe the spade on the grass.



Floatation — with two a's in it — has nothing at all to do with ships or shares. It is a form of relaxation therapy that takes place in tanks of heavily salted water

I lost that sinking feeling

Despite some unease and trepidation at the start, Derwent May allowed himself to cut loose and float away as an almost free spirit in a strangely salty experience

When I learnt how to swim I was doing my National Service in the Army in Egypt and we were encamped on the shore of the Great Bitter Lake, which has the Suez Canal running through it. In that supersaturated salt solution you could not sink. Like the Dead Sea, it was so full of salt that a human body floated in it whether its owner wanted it or not. So, once I was in the water, I was doing breast stroke in no time.

The only trouble was that you almost choked if you swallowed any of the water, and you came out so thickly coated in salt that you looked like a marble statue. Also, when in due course I plunged into normal water, I had to learn to swim all over again.

At any rate, all this should have prepared me for my first experience of floatation. Please note that this is floatation with two "a's" in it — it has nothing at all to do with ships or shares. It is the latest form of relaxation therapy and the place where I tried it out was the Floatworks in Clink Street, behind

Southwark Cathedral in South London. The word "clink" comes from the prison that used to be here, and there is still a rather grim atmosphere in this narrow street with its stark old warehouse façades. This is especially true when you are contemplating the imminent prospect of solitary confinement in the dark.

However, the young man in charge gave me a smiling welcome and I was invited to sit down, have a glass of water and read a brief account of floatation before I took the plunge. Then I was led into my cubicle.

In the corner, on the left, was a shower, while to the right stretched away my pool, steaming gently. I received my final instructions, then the door was shut and I locked it. At least it was me doing the locking.

There was a light overhead, which would go out in ten minutes, and also a bright light at the bot-

tom of the pool shining up through the clear water, which I could control with a button once I was in. Waiting for me were 170 gallons of water, which made the pool about ten inches deep, containing 700lb of Epsom salts to stop me sinking.

I undressed and had a shower, then slid uneasily into the pool. There was a kind of lid made of opaque fibre glass which I could close behind me to shut myself right away from the world, but I decided to leave that open. I lay back,

cries to induce a state of peace. But my neck was beginning to ache and I knew the moment had come for trust and courage. I let my head go.

Well, I was floating. My head stayed where it was and I said to myself firmly, "Relax". I relaxed. I drifted. My arms touched the side once or twice, my feet touched the end. I got an earful of water. For a moment I panicked, then I thought, "No, you must relax, it won't hurt." Then I got another earful — and remembered I had been given a pair of rubber earplugs, which were still on a shelf by the shower.

This was my one big mistake during the whole session. I got up, and as I lifted my head the salty water streamed down from my hair into my eyes. They stung and I hurriedly washed them in the shower. Then I put the earplugs in and slid back into the water to try again.

This time it was much easier. I floated about, feeling rather cheerful and comfortable. I was not thinking about much except for what I was doing. But I was not quite sure whether I was really relaxing. Was I thinking in a relaxed way about what I was doing? Or was I thinking in an anxious way about what I was doing? It was a bit of a puzzle. I felt now and then that my head was keen to lift itself, but then I forgot about it again.

The music had stopped and it was extremely peaceful now. Still, I kept the light on. The water stayed just as warm, since it was the bottom of the pool that was heated. I thought the front of my body, which was lying above the surface,

was getting a little cool, but again I successfully dismissed the thought. I sighed deeply once or twice, and again was not sure whether this was because of increased anxiety or deeper relaxation.

The session was for an hour, after which the light in the ceiling and the music would come on again. The young man had told me that if I had fallen asleep (as sometimes happens, quite safely), the music would get louder and louder until it woke me up. But suddenly I decided that I had had enough. Perhaps I do not really like my head to be empty of thought — on the contrary, I like it to be rather full.

Anyway, I felt that I had now had whatever benefits from floatation I was going to get. I got up, trying to keep the water out of my eyes this time, and scurried into the shower.

What really surprised me when I emerged from my cubicle was how long I had been in there. I thought I had given up after about 25 minutes, but in fact I had been in for nearer 45. So I must have relaxed and let my thoughts drift away much more completely than I had realised. I dried my hair with a dryer in a comfortable sitting-room, paid my £30, and went out into the world again. I found I was still in quite a dream.

It was a warm day, but my body felt rather cool by contrast with what it had been experiencing — and it also felt as if it was not quite mine under my clothes.

For the rest of the day, and much of the next day, the world did seem rather peaceful around me. So perhaps I had successfully floated after all in my little bitter lake.

● Floatworks, Winchester Wharf, Clink Street, London SE1 5DG (0771-357 0111). Single session £30, double session £50. 3-float introductory package £60.



"He looked a dear little fellow with tiny pale pink paws"

FLOATING: THE MEDICAL VIEW

IN WALKING to Clink Street bathhouse, Derwent May did not so much trace the steps of the long-forgotten prisoners as those of certified patients in 19th-century mental hospitals. Dr Thomas Stuttaford, the *Times* Doctor, writes.

The sophisticated surroundings of a modern "floatworks", with its relaxing, dimly lit or pitch-black float tank, provides the same insulation from the worries and clamour of the world as those offered to the insane in an Edwardian Surrey asylum.

The tank recreates the reassuring atmosphere of the womb. At blood heat, it is at the same temperature and is also dark, comfort-

ing and silent, except for the sloshing of the water, no more distracting than the movements of the amniotic fluid in the mother's uterus. Whereas the silence of the womb is disturbed by the beating of the uterine arteries, in the float tank there is carefully graduated music.

Everybody regularly samples the pleasure of soaking in a hot bath but the limbs are not supported, whereas in the float tank the water and Epsom salts take all the pressure off the body. The head falls backwards — further than the floaters expect — but a position of the head and neck which relaxes the spine.

My father would be amazed that 80 years after he supervised

long, hot baths for psychiatric patients, volunteers now pay to have the same treatment in the Clink. My father assured me that the bathhouse regime was a wonderful tranquilliser. He would be delighted that the stressed can still have their tensions eased by an hour's floatation.

Psychiatric patients were not only quietened but remained quiet after treatment. Similarly, users of floatation tanks notice the benefits afterwards. The soaking gives the skin a wonderfully silky texture and induces a feeling of calm and peacefulness; even as the sensory deprivation provided by the floatation enhances sensory awareness and a clarity of perception.

Rebel



READ MY GARDEN

Jane Owen finds the feisty guru of garden design sounding off in his natural habitat



John Brookes with faithful companion Lew in the gravel garden at Denmans in Sussex, where his design school is based. "This is an area of controlled anarchy," he says

Rebel with a pair of secateurs

ME AND MY GARDEN: JOHN BROOKES



John Brookes decorates his garden with bold statues and and bright lilies



Birds in the aviary within the neat conservatory illustrate the "visual excitement" Mr Brookes so strongly advocates

John Brookes never minces words, as his design students who do not come up to scratch will testify. Today his fire is directed on the media for underestimating the potential sophistication of the gardening public. "It is like so much of the telly gardening — all the same old crap. They are terrified of anything too sophisticated. It's all about how quickly can you grow something," he says at Denmans, the Sussex garden he has worked, opened and run as a design school for nearly 20 years.

He is one of the elder statesmen of the garden design world: three times Chelsea gold medalist for his *Financial Times* show gardens, trained with Brenda Colvin and Dame Sylvia Crowe, a friend and colleague of the late Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe, Thomas Church and Russell Page. His circle reads like the *Who's Who* of gardens. His contributions to the garden world seem commonplace today: the garden room, gravel gardening and the use of strong structure to contain informal and architectural plantings are all ideas that he cultivated and made accessible.

rock and alpine water dell, in his parents' garden in Durham when he was nine. Today, he spends most of his time at Denmans, a garden begun by the late Joyce Robinson, where he teaches students from all around the world. At lunch, students break for a glass of wine on Mr Brookes's terrace, which epitomises his style: wild and architectural plantings in tightly structured space.

As he walks and talks, Mr Brookes cuts back, lops and tidies. He says he does little of the work now, leaving it to his full-time gardener, with whom he strolls the garden every morning when he is in the country. And while he is in the garden his favourite tools are secateurs and a heavy broom. "It knocks out some of the weeds around the edge and I like to see the gravel freshly prepared."

Denmans is a garden for all seasons — it has to reflect Mr Brookes's outspoken design ideas. Colour and shape are used, with plenty of old favourites such as box and ball giving form to a perennial planting. He was one of the earliest to develop "infill" planting — a little area for annuals in the middle of herbaceous plantings.

Q I have a circular concrete pond 10ft across. It is 4ft deep at the centre and surrounded by a granite rockery. In a few months' time my grandson will be toddling. I do not wish to put a metal grid over the pond as I did for my children, but for safety's sake I want to fill in the pond temporarily and make a gravel-covered scree garden. I do not want to make a hole in the bottom, because I want to be able to use it as a pond again in later years. Would it be better to build brick piers in the bottom to support heavy planks, with soil and gravel on top of that, or should I fill up most of the depth with rubble and put soil on top? — Mr J. Mason, Cardiff



not dry out completely and have hot roots. Why make a scree at all? Could you not work with the nature of the pond and use it as a bog garden for a couple of years? You could still fill the bottom half with rubble and then top it up with soil. How about a gunnera bed? Big irises? Some dramatic reeds? Another watery alternative is to fill the pond with large, easily removable chunks of rubble and top them off with attractive pebbles about 9in under the water. I know it is technically possible to drown in 6in of water, but surely shallow water would be an acceptable risk and would keep your pond going with minimal effort?

Q I have a honeysuckle, *Lonicera japonica* 'Halliana' which has developed mildew. It is trained on a trellis which faces northwest, so it only gets partial sunshine, mostly in the evenings. I have cut it down to about 1ft from the tub in which it is planted, but the new shoots seem to have the same problem. Is

this a common complaint and what can I do about it? — N.B. Morley, London NW6

A Honeysuckles do get mildew when their roots are too hot. Roots in a tub, even if it is not south-facing, are

always warmer than roots in the ground. Can you arrange for the tub to be in complete shade and the top growth partly in the sun? Otherwise you will need to plant it in shade out in the ground. Cutting a plant down removes the symptoms of disease but does not necessarily solve the problem. Massive summer pruning also weakens a plant. It would have been better to have kept the

top growth so there was something to spray with fungicide. Now you must spray the regrowth until it comes clean. But do deal with that root problem as well, or the fungus will recur all too easily.

Reunited, ready for restoration

GARDENS TO VISIT



The herb garden at Hardwick Hall

■ Hardwick Hall
Doe Lea, Chesterfield, Derbyshire (01246 850430). Open until Nov 1 noon-5.30pm. £2.70 or free to National Trust members. 9am-5pm E of Chesterfield.
This month and next are good times to visit the 17-acre, 16th-century garden because the borders in the west courtyard are just coming up to a riot of hot colours. This is a 19th-century design and there is almost as much colour from the herb garden which aims to recreate an Elizabethan style with wigwags of golden hops echoing the ornamental golden posts of contemporary gardens. It is one of the largest herb gardens in the country and includes a nutery.

■ Hestercombe Gardens Project
Cheddon Fitzpaine, Somerset (01823 413023). Every day 10am-late admission 5pm. £3.25. 4m NE of Taunton.
The Lutyns/Jekyll garden at Hestercombe is well known, the near-perfect 18th-century landscape less so. Restoration work has been carried out by Philip White, a local farmer who was brought up nearby and spent his school days exploring the overgrown 50-acre landscape of follies, sweeps of lawn, specimen trees, rock features and water garden, including the remains of a cascade (now restored to a 50ft thunderous roar). In 1992, Mr White took on a 30-year lease from the Crown Estates and began work. Unlike many 18th-century landscapes, Hestercombe was allowed to become completely overgrown, thus preserving a landscape commissioned and largely designed by the owner, Copstone Warre Bampfylde. The latest addition is the restored witch's house, made from twisted oak branches, with a thatched roof.

■ St Mary's House
Bramber, Sussex (01903 816205). Open today and tomorrow 2-5pm for the National Gardens Scheme. £2. 10m NW of Brighton.
The original 19th-century garden has just been reunited, having been split up earlier this century. At the end of last year the owners of St Mary's House, who already open their topiary and knot garden, bought back the original 3½ acres and now face the daunting task of restoration. They have hacked their way through thick brambles to reveal Victorian heated pineapple pits, a rare circular orchard, woodland and a 140ft fruit wall. Eventually they hope to restore the area and add vegetable and rose gardens. Right now the place looks romantically overgrown. The one acre of well-maintained garden around the house includes a 200ft sink, said to be one of the finest in the country, and a 30ft *Magnolia grandiflora*, which is in flower now. This garden has enough topiary, yew, box and holly to keep its structure throughout the year although the hollyhocks, just going over at the front of the house, make an enchantingly cottagey picture at the moment.

JANE OWEN



Topiary at St Mary's House

STEPHEN ANDERTON'S GARDEN ANSWERS

roots find their way straight into the drains? — Mrs M. McCarthy, London E5
A It is not often you see a weeping willow sold so small, because they grow so fast. Are you sure it is a weeping willow? If so, in the long term the roots may well find their way into leaking drains. But I suspect your neighbour will himself get rid of the tree long before it reaches that stage. In a few years it will be smothering his window completely, not with elegant weeping branches but with the dreary dark shade at the centre of its crown. Open the bedroom window and small flies and aphids will come in like a shot. It will soon be pushing in the house walls, never mind the foundations. Maybe it was an unwanted gift that he has planted with graceful thanks but with an excuse to get rid of it quickly? A tactful conversation is called for.

Write to Garden Answers, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9VN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. Enclosures cannot be returned.

On its way up again at last

Why is water so appealing in a garden? It is partly because you can see it move through the landscape. It puts tension into the stillness. And, to a lesser degree, the same tension can be put into the landscape by plants, if they are used cleverly.

Fat yew hedges flanking a passageway will do it, by squeezing. A tunnel of *laburnums* overhanging a path can do it, by pressing. Or a serious brick wall can do it, by wriggling. Also — and don't laugh — even the much despised dwarf conifers can do it. They do it by making an impact, where their solid form hits the ground, letting their weight and solidity show.

It is too easy to dismiss dwarf conifers as nasty little lumps in heather gardens, the scatter cushions of Sixties chic. But that's not fair. They can be used well and to great effect.

At the Hampton Court show this year, the "World Peace Gardens" had a great stone dome three yards across, sinking into a large area of bedding. It was more telling than all the other clever ideas in the garden put together. It was strong and simple, and there was visual tension there. You could see the sense of movement.

Many dwarf conifers, and indeed large conifers, have crisp, clean shapes which are just as useful in gardens as a stone dome. Some are low and creeping, such as *Juniperus sabina* 'Tamariscifolia', and others are globular, such as *Thuja orientalis* 'Aurea Nana', or tabular, or conical. But when their bases are hidden by heathers and you cannot

Dwarf conifers need not look like nasty little lumps. Stephen Anderton meets designers making masterpieces of them

see the point at which these rather formal shapes meet the ground, they lose their momentum. Like sheep lost in a field of wheat, they are stuck. They become just bumps in a field of heather, instead of structures with their own poise.

There are better ways of handling dwarf conifers which let them shine. The garden at York Gate, in Adel near Leeds, does this well. The garden was made by Robin Spencer and his mother Sybil, and its delicious topiary extravaganzas are familiar to everyone who looks at gardening books. Since Mrs Spencer died four years ago, the garden has passed to the Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Society, which has put a retired gardener into the house and continues to open the garden to the public.

Mr Spencer was the designer at York Gate, and he had a flair for seeing the value of the natural shape of plants, and finding a way of elevating them until they became



Return of dwarf conifers

elements of the design. He created an espalier of blue Atlas cedar, on a low wall and one of *pyracantha* against the house. He also made a mini-arboretum of dwarf conifers which even the most extreme conifer-phobe would admire.

The premise was simple. Dwarf conifers sit solidly upon the ground, like poodles or a collection of knitted hats. So Mr Spencer planted them in a sea of large pebbles, on a gentle slope. Instantly the picture changes. Putting these shapes on a mobile surface gives them a sense of being less fixed. You feel you could kick them like library steps, and they would sail across the pebbles and bounce back again.

Head gardener Richard Staples is currently replanting these conifers which have begun to grow old and tired and lose their clarity of shape, in order that the freshness of Mr Spencer's design can work again. Nearby larger conifers are unfortunately now of an age to

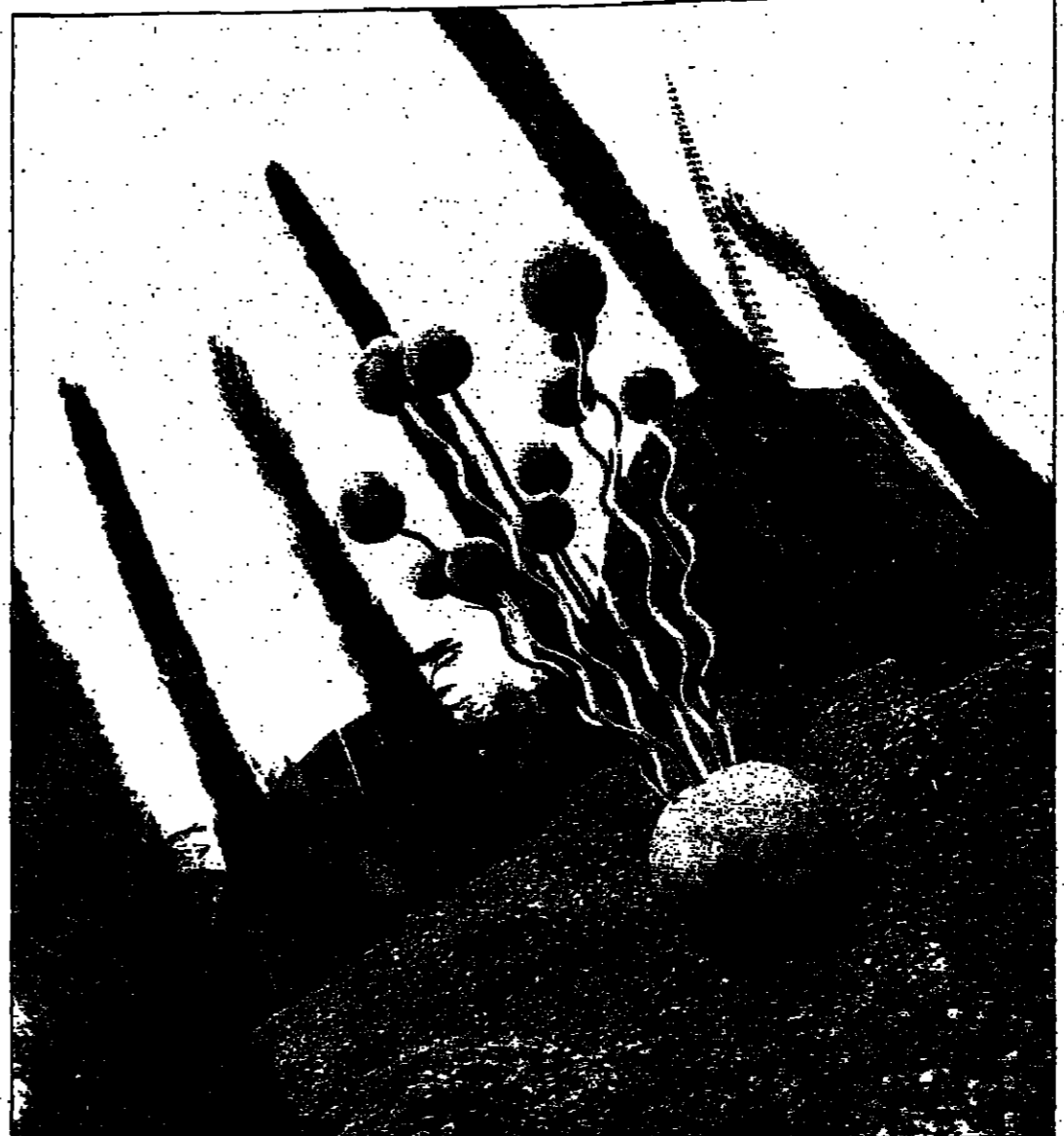
carpet the pebbles with fallen needles, which spoil the effect and have to be regularly removed.

At Hampton Court this year, a garden designed by Cleve West and Johnny Woodford for Thames Water used groups of tall pencil cypresses rising out of dark grey gravel banks, in Lanzarote fashion. But where the cypresses met the gravel, the surface was mounded up in an encircling crater, like ripples in a pool, and in the bottom of the crater at the base of the cypresses was a glimmer of red gravel. The whole effect was to give the cypresses extraordinary vertical thrust. They were emerging from the gravel instead of sitting on it.

It was such a simple thing to do, and yet it gave the scene a new dimension of interest. Had the trees been plonked in a wash of Home Counties lavender and too-daring *Cerithe*, major "Purpurascens", they would have looked as immobile as a 7ft basketball player whose shorts have just dropped to his ankles.

The momentum comes from seeing the point of balance and making the most of the point at which the shape meets the earth. Isn't it the same with a beautifully balanced, elegant pot? You put it in a peaceful place in the garden where its delicate centre of gravity can be undisturbed. You don't waste poise like that in the raging depths of a herbaceous border, or even in the calmer seas of a heather garden.

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The Waterwise Garden by Cleve West and Johnny Woodford exploited the pencil cypress's shape.

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Wilde flowers set for a high-street bloom

First Oscar Wilde, then the Queen Mother and now Marks & Spencer (M&S). Swooningly clove-scented, opulently sized with blooms up to 5in in diameter and with a romantic pedigree as the flower of the Victorian social season, the Malmaison carnation exercises a powerful fascination. It is hardly surprising that its devotees should include a flamboyant fin-de-siècle Irish playwright, our most resplendent royals and the highest-profile name in British retailing.

From the size and formation of its petals, the Malmaison is identifiable as the flower that Oscar Wilde wore. Its petals come right down to the stem and are quite ragged. Oscar Wilde had his buttonhole Malmaison dyed green.

Today, as part of M&S's programme to introduce the best scented historic garden flowers into its outlets, about 25 to 30 stores across the country will be selling two Malmaison cultivars as cut flowers: the rose-pink 'Princess of Wales' (named after another enthusiast who later became Queen Alexandra and was often photographed wearing a Malmaison corsage) and the blush-pink 'Old Blush'.

At £6.99 for 11 stems (and in time for the first anniversary of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales), demand is expected to be high, but if you are unlucky in your pursuit of these faded blooms, why not grow your own? You can follow the example of Jim Marshall, National Trust gardens adviser, who not only supplied the mother plants to M&S's growers but also produced the blooms for Stephen Fry's buttonholes in Wilde.

"There's a mystique about growing Malmaisons," he says, "but there shouldn't be. People tend to over-water them and give them too much heat when all they want is frost-free conditions during the winter and a fair amount of light. Growing them is similar to growing the modern perpetual-flowering carnation except that they prefer a cooler temperature during the autumn and winter, and need to be placed in a cool, airy glasshouse or a well-ventilated conservatory.

Sue Corbett welcomes the revival of a Victorian carnation



Stephen Fry with a Wilde buttonhole

Mr Marshall, who holds one of two national collections of Malmaisons, sells all five of his cultivars by mail order as either plants (despatched from late April) or plugs (late March). Of the five, Souvenir de la Maison, known as 'Old Blush', and 'Princess of Wales', the two to be sold by M&S, have the strongest scents. The others are the bright rose-pink 'Duchess of Westminster', 'Tayside Red' and pale blush 'Thora'.

Malmaisons virtually died out between the two World Wars, probably because they flower only once a year, between June and August, whereas the perpetual carnation, introduced from the USA, flowers twice. But in Victorian times, the Malmaison was the fashionable flower of the season, appearing in fantastic arrangements, always in crystal or cut glass, at high-society banquets and balls. It was a tradition to put a single Malmaison in a champagne glass packed with moss and take it up to the lady of the house on her breakfast tray. In country-house libraries, there would be tiered displays of Malmaisons, their pots hidden by moss.

In high Victorian and Edwardian Britain, large estates such as Waddesdon and West Dean would each have several glass-houses dedicated to Malmaisons, and there would be fierce competition among head gardeners to produce a plant bearing the greatest number of flowers. At Lanhydrock, in Cornwall, now owned by the National Trust, the tradition of having Malmaisons on the dining room table goes back 100 years. A photograph, still displayed outside the dining room, shows the magnificent table display of Malmaisons one June day in 1950 when the 7th Viscount Clifden entertained George VI and the present Queen Mother to lunch.

"The Clifden family, the Agar-Robartes, loved Malmaisons, and insisted on having them on the table, which is a tradition we maintain today," says Ken Golding, the house manager. "We're very aware of their presence in the house because of their beautiful aroma, which is overpowering first thing in the morning when the doors have been closed."

Sadly, the Malmaison tradition was in abeyance at Lanhydrock by the mid 1980s, but it was the National Trust's keenness to reinstate the Malmaison there that started Mr Marshall on what has become a major passion. "Having found some Malmaisons in Scotland and one at the RHS gardens at Wisley, my late wife Marjorie and I began to build them up," he says. "Mick Fuller of the Botany Department at Seale Hayne College, now part of the University of Plymouth, micropropagated them for us, which you have to do with carnations as they're prone to viruses. This introduced vigour. In fact, the results were startling, and we were able to have a lot more plants."

M&S's search for a Malmaison supplier began three years ago when an employee of its importer and packer, Flower Plus, found a book about historic flowers at a car-boot sale. The trail led to the Jim Marshall and Mick Fuller team, and a relationship that is now blossoming.

"A lot of people have bred scented out of their products," says Paula Edgington, horticulture technologist at M&S, "so to find something that is naturally so scented was exciting. As to volume, we'll multiply these flowers next year and, rather than spread them thinly across the country, we'll maximise their availability in stores where we know we can sell them. There are people who want to buy things like ponies and dolphins, and the Malmaisons will be geared towards those customers. We're also experimenting to see if there is any way we can manipulate the crop to repeat flower in a year."

But I suspect, if there were, a Victorian head gardener would have thought of it years ago.



Jim Marshall, who grows the two scented Malmaison carnations that M&S is reviving

MALMAISON CARNATION OFFER



The 'Princess of Wales'

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The 'Old Blush'



When the foliage has faded, lift shallots and autumn-sown onions. Let them dry in the sun before storing.
Make sure main-crop potatoes and celery are well earthen up, and keep them well watered. Celery is one of the thirstiest vegetables.
Make sure border phlox have plenty of water to keep them blooming into September. Dryness at the roots makes them more susceptible to damage from mildew.
Take cuttings of pinks, pansies and violas, using 2-3in shoots in a very sandy compost.
Tip cuttings on hydrangeas, which will root easily now in sandy compost under polythene even without rooting hormone. Cut back the leaves on the cuttings to 2in long, so they do not overlap too much in the pot. Overlapping foliage leads to yellowing, then to moulds and death. Remove the lower pairs of leaves from the cutting, but leave the buds intact: these will shoot after the cutting has rooted and make strong new stem.
Even easy bedding plants like marigolds, calendulas and petunias are better dead-headed with finger and thumb to keep them looking good and full of flower. Take both the spent and the soon-to-be-spent flowers, so that a clean flush can follow.
Cut back to a new shoot all the spent flowering stems of argyranthemum in patio pots, so that a complete new flush of flowers will follow.
Move outdoor pots into the shade during brief periods of holiday. Stand them in large shallow saucers, where a small reservoir of water may last for a few days. Wrapping clay pots tightly in polythene will also help plants to last longer between waterings, by reducing the moisture lost through evaporation.

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COUNTAX

'I wondered if hens were often blown off their nests in heat waves. Or was this a solitary case of rural shell shock?'

Off the Aga, into the frying pan

Did you know that some 500 people in Britain are injured by dog baskets every year? A recent survey of hospital accident and emergency admissions has revealed a baffling, even comic, side to a normally tragic set of statistics. Apparently, about 1,700 people are hurt by cotton wool each year, 1,040 come off worst in close encounters with cardboard; and 140 are hospitalised by goats.

It was the mention of goats that got me thinking about rural accidents, and in particular the non-fatal ones of a bizarre sort that tend to happen to farm animals. Since the best of these don't even involve a visit to the vet, they are unlikely to feature in Government statistics. I'm talking about the sort of incident that happened on this farm last summer.

Back then, I had a number of bantam hens sitting on goose eggs, and one very sultry afternoon I heard a loud bang, like a smallish bomb going off. On running out to investigate, I discovered a startled bantam, covered in sinking residue — an egg had addled and exploded under her in the heat. I couldn't help wondering

whether hens were often blown off their nests in heat waves, or if this was a solitary instance of rural shell shock.

So this week, inspired by the Home Accident Surveillance System report, I set about compiling my own weird animal accident survey by quizzing friends and neighbours.

It soon emerged that one of the most hazardous places, for animals, was the farmhouse. This is because so many of them end up there, being coaxed as family pets. One friend confessed that she had once kept a batch of orphan ducklings on her Aga, in a box on top of a pile of towels, and only discovered that this was an unwise thing to do when one of them leapt into a pan of gravy and attempted to fricassee itself.

As I know to my cost, bringing baby farm animals into the kitchen results in endless wrestling matches between

different species, in which minor injuries are sustained. It's odd, because in these indoor contests the normal rules don't apply, and the issue is decided on the basis of strength of character alone. So a collie dog will be beaten by a newborn lamb, and a cat outmanoeuvred by a determined chick.

Most of these fights seem to be triggered by territorial disputes over the comfiest spots in the room, but even these, in themselves, can pose a threat. An acquaintance in Buckinghamshire produced an alarming story about a pig of hers, which was given

DOWN TO EARTH



LUCY FINNEY

mild concussion by a kitchen sofa. The pig, a family favourite, had grown accustomed to trotting into the kitchen at whim and dozing on the sofa. This was perfectly safe, if a little inconvenient, until the pig got pregnant and produced a litter. After that it was just a matter of time until the sofa buckled under the strain, hurling its stout occupants to the floor.

Of course, it's not just the farm kitchen which is dangerous to animals. Any flight of stairs can cause problems. People told me of incidents where very large animals — cows and ponies — prompted,

no doubt, by idle curiosity, had wandered up steep sets of stairs and then been unable to get back down again. Instead, they'd been forced to blunder aimlessly about in bedrooms, tussling with mirrors and getting bits of themselves caught in valuable objets d'art.

If it's hazardous for farmyard creatures to be curious, it seems even more risky for them to be highly sexed. Everyone I know who keeps Muscovy ducks has confessed to a difficulty in preventing them from getting squashed on farm driveways. This is because Muscovy drakes are the birds least likely to ever need dosing with Viagra. They can keep going for hours and hours, and during this time are oblivious to all traffic. Nothing can deflect them: 40-ton lorries reversing, urgent postal deliveries, or even small boys on tricycles.

Some of the stories I heard about sex-related accidents were strangely inspiring. One, in particular, struck a chord. An elderly 23-year-old stallion, long put out to pasture, perked up unexpectedly at the sound of a distant mare. Regaining all his youthful enthusiasm, he leapt two five-barred gates, hurled himself through a barbed-wire entanglement, and managed to sire a foal before collapsing back into his normal geriatric stupor.

If one thing emerged from my informal survey, it was that the master of the non-fatal, bizarre accident is the farm dog. I heard of whippets which managed to half-stifle themselves inside duvet covers and, in the most baffling incident, a Jack Russell which had hurt its leg was pronounced by the vet to be suffering from "tennis elbow". I've been unable to stop thinking about this dog, and wondering how it managed to play enough tennis to do itself an injury.

Maybe that's the true value of all bizarre accident surveys: they inspire you with a fresh sense of wonder at the more banal aspects of the world — whether rural or urban.

How I made it back from the crack of doom

The church renovation had been going well until the stonemason went AWOL, leaving AJ Tipping with a problem to solve

It was vital that I returned to the church in Somerset as soon as possible, in order to complete what, when it had begun, had seemed like a simple repair to the crack in the vestry wall.

Now, however, the vestry lay in ruins, the mason responsible had disappeared, leaving the unsecured building in the control of a killer guard dog which the previous evening, as I listened horrified on the telephone, had apparently attacked and possibly eaten my neighbour before ripping out the phone line.

I'd gone to London to search for the only photograph in

existence of the vestry, having been assured by the insane assistants of the missing stonemason that no progress was possible without some indication of what the building had looked like before they had destroyed it. All I found was a tiny black and white image with all significant details of how the quoinstones should be rebuilt obscured by ivy. I had enlarged this image to the size of a French Impressionist painting, but could only discern in it the dim outlines of disaster. Now, as a result of a bizarre mechanical accident affecting the petrol tank of my car, it would only hold about a quarter of a gallon, giving me a touring range of eight miles.

I had no cash. Worn out by meandering from rural garage to rural garage and the arguments which seemed inevitably to ensue when I attempted to pay for a litre of petrol and a Mars bar with a credit card, I had already spent one night feverishly attempting to sleep in the back of the car. But the constant vibrations of bats, the dull tumult of owl pellets thudding through the sun roof and the tiny slurpings of moonstruck voices sipping my brake fluid had conspired to keep me awake.

'You say you live locally, so who was the pub landlady in 1989?'

And I was fretting about the disastrous consequences of the building work. Why hadn't I hired the first mason, the one who could have done the work? Because "he couldn't do it for the foreseeable future", that's why. The following day I proceeded, starving and exhausted, through Wiltshire at less than ten miles an hour, being overtaken by hedgehogs, shrews and vigorous fescues.

When, as dusk fell on the Somerset border, a galloping rag and bone man reined in his horse and gave me a leaking petrol can and a sausage he had found, tears of gratitude filled my eyes.

By nightfall, I was within striking distance of home, running beside the river Parrett. Ahead of me lay a pub which I had visited a few times. It seemed just possible they might give me credit, or allow me to swap my car for a sandwich and a bottle of beer.

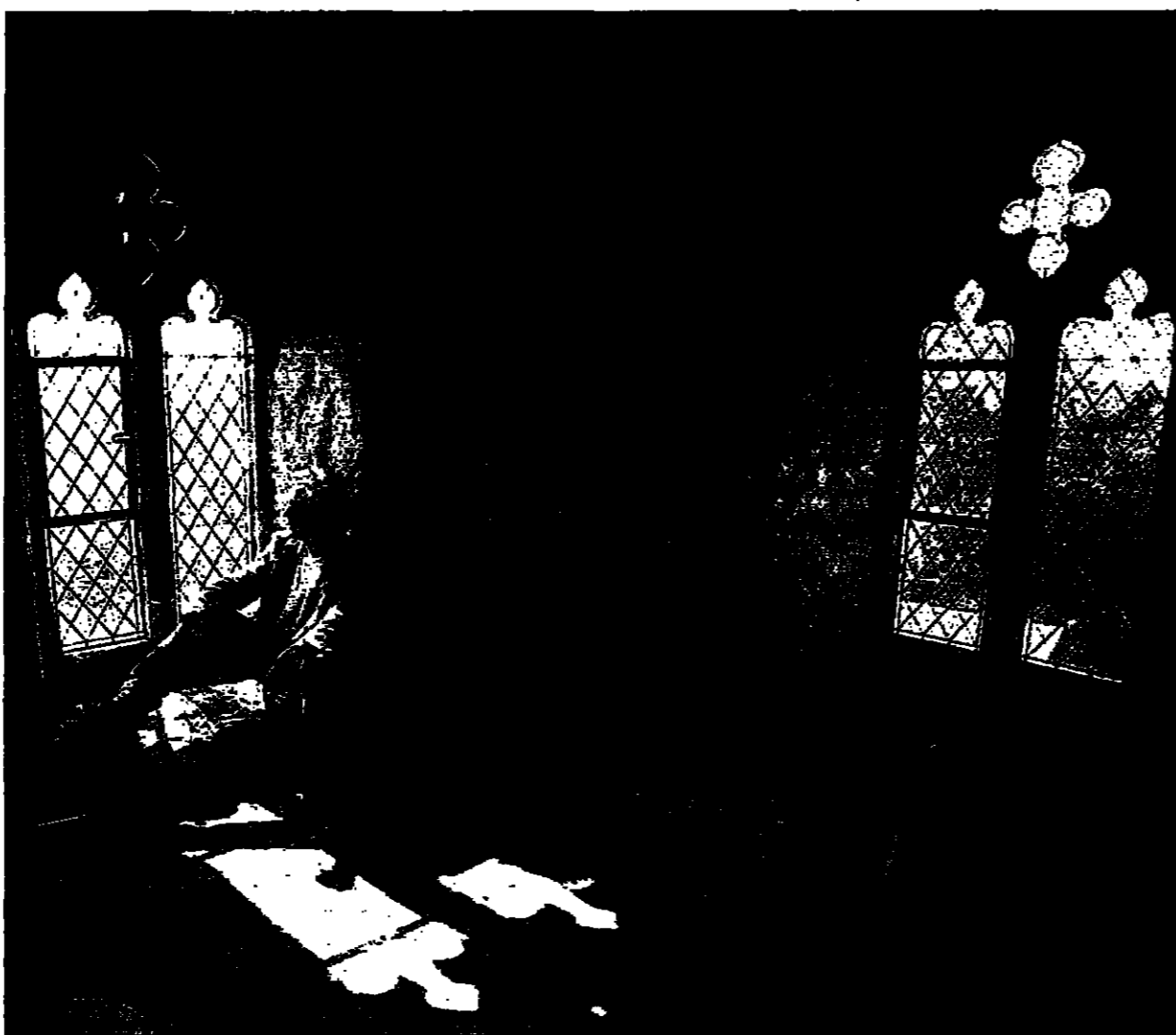
It was too late for food. There is a companion came in out of the night. After listening in silence, he began ostentatiously tapping the side of his nose while staring pointedly at his friend.

"Your trouble is," he said, "you talk to much." And turning to me: "And you're a spy. Why you asking these questions? Don't talk to him. Talk to L. For I won't answer 'em."

This pretty much stopped me in my tracks. Desperate attempts at affability were called for. I ransacked my



AJ Tipping at the church in Charlynch, Somerset, that he is renovating. "What had seemed like a simple repair to a crack in the vestry wall had turned into a nightmare"



The stonemason had disappeared and no one knew what the quoinstones had looked like before they had been destroyed.

brain for eel quips. I dimly remember muttering about the remarkable Sargassus of the eel: the outstanding navigational powers which enable it to find its way across vast distances to a dinner plate in Japan.

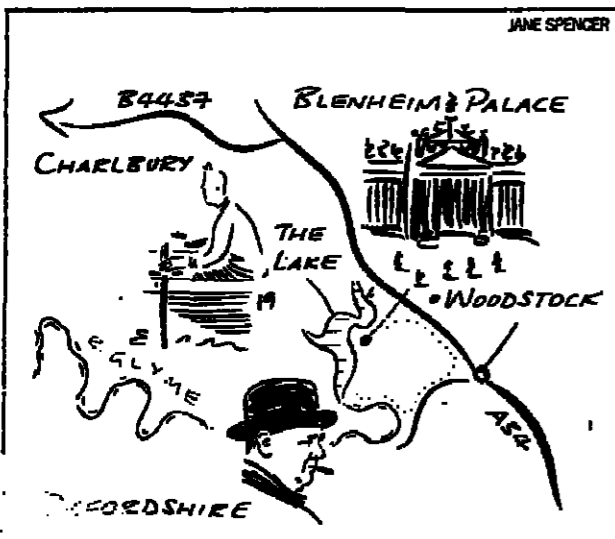
"Go away from me," said the eel man with real ferocity. After a bit the other man came over. "You say you live locally," he said, dubiously naming the village as he sat

down. "How many pubs are there?" "One," I said. "There used to be another." "And what was the name of the landlady in 1989?" This, miraculously, I knew. He seemed reassured. "Don't mind him," he said as his companion at the bar watched with a steely gaze. "He can be a bit hard."

"Bit of a bastard eh?" "He's my brother," he said, getting to his feet with the smile fading.

They had been staring at me for some time when I felt them coming over to the table, each of them carrying a couple of pints of cider and three opened bottles of Special Brew. "We thought we'd have a drink with you," said the steely-jawed one, pushing the beers towards me.

The following afternoon, deafened by the clatter of falling pollen and the Sikorski thud of whirling dandelion seeds, I stumbled into the churchyard. There were two notes pinned to the door. The neighbour! The dog!



ON THE SPOT: BLEINHEIM PALACE

The place: Vanbrugh's Grand Bridge, Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxfordshire.

The view: the grounds, landscaped by Capability Brown, have grassy banks curving gently towards the lake — ideal for picnickers. Rowing boats and swans meander across the lake and the island has a narrow jetty. The palace is one of the finest examples of English Baroque architecture.

Historical interest: the palace was built in the 18th century for John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough. Sir Winston Churchill was born here in 1940.

How to get there: take A34 to Woodstock and follow the signs. Entrance to the grounds is £1. The park is open all year. OS ref: 162/442 on sheet 164.

Also nearby: eight miles west is Charlbury, an attractive town with a small museum, coffee house and the award-winning Bull Inn.

DEBORAH KING

FEATHER REPORT

Bye bye black bird

IN the waters swirling around the rocky coasts of northern and western Scotland, a lively little bird can sometimes be seen swimming and diving. In parts of Scotland, it is still called by the name the Vikings gave it — the tystie. More generally it is known as the black guillemot. In summer it is an almost all-black bird, apart from a large and conspicuous white patch on its wing and a white underwing. It sometimes walks on land, on its red feet, but it is not as much of a walker as the puffin.

Like puffins, black guillemots are now at the end of their breeding season. However, they are still to be seen on the cliffs where they nest, or swimming in the coves and inlets beneath them.

As autumn advances, puffins will go further out to sea, but the black guillemots will stay close to shore all winter.

They are monogamous birds, and if they survive the winter storms (or the oil spills that also threaten them), the same pair will come back to the same nesting hole each year. They lay their two eggs in crevices in the cliff-face, in caves or under boulders, at the foot of the cliff — although eggs or young in these low nests can be swept away by high seas. They have also been found nesting in holes in harbour walls, cracks in old ferry boats, and the mouths of canons.

Just now they are beginning to moult. When they are fully into winter dress they look very different because most of their body is

white speckled with black. But the white wing patches will still be as distinctive.

On a winter walk along the cliffs or the shore, they may be the only seabirds you see, apart from a great northern diver and the eternally whetting gulls.

In that season it is quite difficult to see them swimming among the choppy waves under a sunless sky. But they start to acquire their summer plumage as early as January or February, and soon after that they can be watched at their most entertaining.

THEY GATHER on the shore or in the water just off it, and engage in all sorts of antics. They strut around on the shore making piping calls, or perform the equivalent of strutting in the sea, rearing their bodies out of the water and thrashing along.

Sometimes they will form long, straight lines in the water and all dive together, after which there will be underwater chases.

These actors are probably unpaired birds showing off in order to acquire mates — and when spring comes, they will be on the cliffs with the old couples, starting a new generation.

DERWENT MAY

● What's about: Twitthers: sand at Tacumshin, Co Wexford; Caspian tern at Breydon Waters, Norfolk; black-headed gull at Rattray, Aberdeenshire. *Birders: Look out for starlings and black-headed gulls swooping after flying ants. Details from Birdline, 0801 700222. Calls cost 50p a minute.*



The black guillemot can be seen along Scottish cliffs

A pac

Jack Crossley

Native

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Homes have been found for five of Little Skye's first litter of seven puppies. American Indian song dogs were thought to be extinct but the breed has survived. They are agile dogs and can live to be 20 years old

A pack of bow-wows that pow-wow

They can sing, hunt and even herd buffalo. Jack Crossley meets the first litter of Native American song dogs to be born in Britain

If you are looking for a dog which can guard your home against burglars, track game, or even herd buffalo, babysit, dive for fish, provide hair for weaving and keep you warm at night, pay a visit to Wales. Near Llanysul in Ceredigion, Dyfed, Sarah Harrison, 35, is raising Britain's first litter of rare Indian song dogs, a breed which flourished in North America until it almost became extinct at the end of the last century.

"sing" in high-pitched tones, "like some sort of canine choir". An essential element of Native American tribal life, the dogs that look like wolves but are not related to them were used for guarding and hunting. Before the arrival of European immigrants, there were an estimated 200,000 of them and it was common for families to have as many as 30 dogs. However, settlers and soldiers shot the dogs indiscriminately and Native Americans, starving on their reservations, were reduced to eating them. By 1890 and the time of the massacre of the Sioux at Wounded Knee, in South Dakota, few song dogs had survived. When he was 14, Kim La



Little Skye came to this country after owner Sarah Harrison promised to protect the breed's purity

Flamme was given two of the rare dogs by his part-Blackfoot grandfather who told him: "They can do the work of half a dozen men." At the time it was assumed the breed had died out, and since then Mr La Flamme has dedicated his life

to saving it. He wrote to every Native American organisation and reservation in the USA, Canada and Mexico and tracked down families who still had dogs. He carefully researched the ancestry of every dog he discovered before including

it in his breeding programme. Mr La Flamme is now credited with re-founding the breed and is head of the American Indian Dog Club. "It is not possible for me to prove that any of the dogs I found were true, pure Indian dogs, but

through my research I believe they were," he says. "If any were not, they were certainly the closest remaining relatives. I have spent most of my life on this quest and believe that I have now recreated the true plains Indian dog. "It is essential that the breeding programme be strictly adhered to so that the breed is not lost once again. I hope anyone who wants to share their life with these dogs realises the responsibility they have in ensuring the correct bloodlines are used when breeding and that they do not try to change the breed. I also want to emphasise that this breed is not for everyone."

Sarah Harrison had to convince Mr La Flamme that she would protect the purity of the breed before he would let her have her red-grey sable bitch, Little Skye, and the chocolate-and-tan Highland Storm. Now she is looking for homes for the remaining two puppies from Little Skye's first litter of seven. "It is very important to

encourage a close bond with a song dog when it is young. Once bonded it is hard for them to change owners. If you don't think you could keep an Indian dog for its entire life — and they often live to be 20 — don't get one," she says. "But if you love nature and would like to save a piece of history and enjoy an animal that still has natural instincts, then maybe you are that special person who could share your life with an American Indian dog."

"They have much of the agility of cats and are gentle with children and love to play games. Thanks to Kim La Flamme's selective breeding, the song dog looks and behaves exactly as it did thousands of years ago and, just as it used to round up buffalo, could be trained to round up sheep."

For a booklet on American Indian dogs, send £3 (incl p&p) to Sarah Harrison, Ty Maesymellion, Maesymellion, near Llanysul, Ceredigion, Dyfed SA44 4NJ (01545 590384).

Noddy finds his niche down on the Downs

Catching sight of the long-necked, shaggy giant grazing alongside the sheep, people on their way home from the pub in the East Sussex village of Forest Row have been known to take an instant vow of temperance.

Farmer Alan Jamieson has done it himself. "Sometimes, on my early-morning rounds, I blink twice and wonder what that brown thing in with the sheep is," he says. "Then I remember — it's Noddy, my Peruvian ally." In fact, Noddy was born in Nottingham but, like all llamas, his forbears originally came from Peru. The hardiness and protective instincts that make llamas prized animals in South America have won a very special place on Tablehurst Farm, a community-owned organic farm where foxes and badgers wreak havoc on last year's lamb population. At least 35 of Jamieson's 240 free-range Friesian lambs were killed by foxes last spring, depriving the farm of their potential profit and sending feed costs soaring because the flock had to be brought in every night in an effort to protect them. That in itself caused the animals — and Alan Jamieson — more distress.

Sue Beenstock finds a farmer with an unusual lamb protector: llamas

says, because it would give the lambs only a week or two's reprieve before more foxes repopulated this area, and the badgers which attack weak lambs, are a protected species. "Anyway," says Mr Jamieson, "we're proud of having so many used badger sets on our farm. But it runs you ragged. You're trying your best for the flock, but in the mornings all you find are ripped carcasses and ear tags. It's such a loss."

Then Mr Jamieson heard that a woman in the county, Linda Johnson, was breeding llamas, and remembered how a Scottish colleague who used llamas on trekking holidays had found they were also useful in protecting sheep from foxes. A couple of telephone calls later and Noddy, a two-and-a-half-year-old llama, who was too nervous to be a pet and too ugly for breeding, was destined for delivery to Tablehurst Farm. For his first 24 hours he was penned into a corner of the barn, where



Protecting his own: farmer Alan Jamieson feeds Noddy, the llama which is saving his lambs from foxes

half the flock was spending the night, but by next morning he had jumped out of his pen to be with the lambs.

"It's incredible, as soon as he hears a lamb in distress he goes crazy. It's really the lambs he bonds with. He nuzzles and sniffs them and is away to the other side of the field as soon as he hears their cries," says Mr Jamieson.

And has Noddy had an impact on the lambs' survival rate? Without doubt, says Mr Jamieson. "We'd already had two lamb deaths before Noddy came, now in two months there have been no kills at all. He just scares the foxes off."

Noddy spends much of the day standing on a raised mound in the sheep's field. As soon as he hears an anxious bleat, or spots

a fox, dog, or even a rabbit, he gallops over. "His head is about 6ft 6in off the ground and, as he gallops, he lowers his head and weaves his neck from side to side to get you in his vision. Then he stops dead, staring at the intruder, rearing and stamping at it," says Mr Jamieson.

"It's a terrifying sight if you aren't used to him, but only dangerous if you're a fox."

More than just a super, furry farm animal

Keeping llamas as pets is becoming more popular in Britain, writes Victoria O'Brien



Llama breeder Linda Johnson adores her charges

Although the presence of llamas is now increasing on smallholdings and farms in Britain, for many people the creatures are more than just a farm animal. They are a beloved pet.

Margaret Eaton, an antiquarian book dealer from Buckinghamshire, bought her first llama ten years ago and now has an extended family of seven. "They seem slightly eccentric and aren't difficult to look after," she says. "Llamas also have great characters and respond well to humans. They are quiet and calm. The woman I bought my first llama from told me that if she ever gets stressed out, she goes and sits with the llamas for half an hour and feels much better."

Although in other countries, particularly South America, llamas are used extensively for wool, in Britain most owners keep them for pleasure, Mrs Eaton says. "The most beautiful sight is to see llamas running one behind the other, bouncing up and down in unison, like deers do."

Llama and Alpaca Association. Linda Johnson got hooked on llamas during the late Eighties and now breeds them. Male llamas cost around £600, females between £1,200 and £2,000. Joyce Pope, a senior lecturer on animal behaviour at The Natural History Museum, keeps two llamas, but admits very little is understood about them. "We know so much about the behaviour of cats, dogs, and even horses, but llama body language is more difficult to interpret because it is communicated mainly through subtle movements of their ears," she explains. Ms Pope claims that you will know when a llama is about to spit because its ears will be pulled back and its eyes narrowed.

Ms Pope's main pleasure in keeping llamas is walking them to the village shop. "We modified two Turkish donkey saddle-bags and load them up with the shopping," she says.

Llamas, however, are not suitable for riding. "They only have teeth on their lower jaw so it is not possible to attach a bit to the harness," explains Candia Midworth, the secretary of the association. Like most other pets, llamas need regular grooming to prevent matting their

thick coats. Although the animals like the cold weather, and because of the high lanolin content of their coat they will sleep out in snow, llama owners build open-fronted shelters with beds of straw. Their diet is grass or hay. One of the most curious differences between llamas

and other domestic animals is that they are never "on heat". Being "induced ovulators" (the act of copulation triggers ovulation) means that breeding can take place at any time. Although gestation is approximately 11½ months, female llamas become ready for breeding again in two weeks.

Ms Eaton has been present at several llama births, but has only once had to call the vet in. "It's quite amazing to watch," she explains. "Llamas stand to give birth, and five minutes later the little one is hopping around. They do not lick their young or help them to their feet, and at first you can't help thinking that they are terribly uncaring."

"After a while, however, they start suckling and the mother and baby start nuzzling to each other."

The British Llama and Alpaca Association produces a quarterly magazine, *Camelids Chronicle*, and gives advice and tips on buying and keeping llamas. For further information, contact Candia Midworth, Bankway House, Eghingham Common, Leatherhead, Surrey KT24 5JB.



Becker needs a new home

ADOPT ME

Becker is a one-year-old black-and-white collie-cross who is affectionate and playful. He adores people and would suit an energetic family with the time to exercise him. Becker has been neutered and is house-trained. If you would like to adopt Becker, please contact the National Canine Defence League at Shoreham, Sussex, on 01273 452576.

A VET WRITES

Q We give our cat Peggy a regular dose of liquid paraffin to prevent fur balls. She does not like it. Would cod-liver oil work as well?

A Liquid paraffin is not digested and passes through the cat unchanged. It lubricates the passage of a bulky fur ball through the intestines into the rectum and thence to the great outdoors. Cod-liver oil is digestible and absorbed in the same way as any other food. Start the anti-fur ball battle by combing Peggy vigorously every day. Don't stop until there is no more loose hair on the comb and none left for her to swallow.

Q Our eight-year-old cat is frightened of going outside ever since he was shot at with an airgun. He has an oversized toilet tray but his aim is poor and he misses the tray and urinates on the floor — possibly because he stands rather than crouches. What can we do to redirect him?

A Your cat might not be missing his target, he could be marking his territory. Insecure cats do this and standing to urinate is characteristic spraying behaviour. Talk to your vet. Hormone treatment — tablets or injections — are often effective and help the cat to regain confidence. He might be prepared to use an outdoor toilet tray if it was put in a roofed box, like a dog kennel, to give him a feeling of safety and privacy.

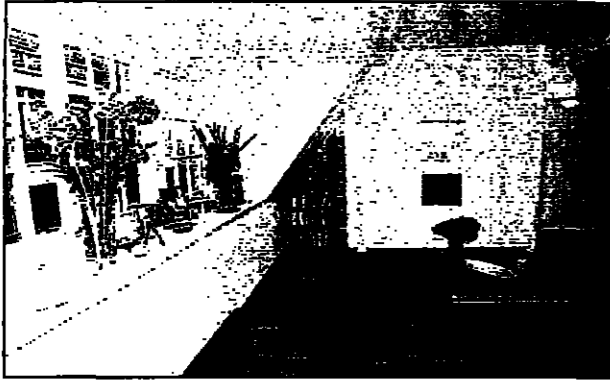
Q Summer is a miserable time for my five-year-old Lakeland terrier because he develops an itch on his tummy and the inside of his legs. His skin is bare with bright red patches from his scratching. He is regularly wormed and has his boosters. This year the vet gave him a fortnight's supply of pills to "cool him down". They helped but the effect wore off as soon as they were finished. We are not prepared to let him go on a course of steroids. Have you any suggestions?

A Your terrier's troubles read like an allergy. Washing his underneath daily using a mild insecticidal shampoo could help by killing mites if they are the offenders or removing minute particles of dust to which he is allergic. Ask your vet if he thinks a second opinion from a specialist veterinary dermatologist would help. Laboratory and sensitivity tests could discover the cause.

Write to The Times Vet, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9SN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility.

14 · property

Don't get involved with a builder



The living room used to be divided up into office space

It seems that Heather Mills's gruelling campaign to fit 22,000 children with second-hand false limbs, combined with nib-breaking deadlines for her autobiography *Out on a Limb* and demanding television appearances were as nothing compared to the saga of doing up her Soho flat.

"It was more stressful than losing my leg and the war in Bosnia," says Ms Mills, the model and actress who has also become an anti-landmine campaigner. "I will never, ever do it again. I had a plumber who fancied me; he was going to beat me up because I wouldn't go out with him."

Ms Mills was fitted with a false leg after a road accident in 1993. "Then there was a carpenter who wanted all the money upfront and had a key," she recalls. "He started bashing down the door when I was in the bath." (She now has a video intercom so she is warned about unwanted visitors.) She had more problems getting a bridging loan for the flat and got through six teams of builders. "They were nutters. Total nutters," she declares in a strong Merseyside accent that could strip wallpaper.

She may have lost a leg, but Heather Mills insists that trying to create a dream flat in Soho was far worse, says

Alex O'Connell

"Buy something that's finished, unless you are a woman of leisure," she warns, stretching out on the purple velvet day bed.

There is nothing leisurely about Ms Mills, who shows me around the flat at a pace that leaves me panting in time with Oliver, her terrier.

The devoted charity worker bought the flat for £275,000 in October 1997. "It was an empty building that had been used as offices. It had no gas and no water," she says.

She moved into the flat on Denman Street, just behind Shaftesbury Avenue, at the end of January when it was still "a dust-bucker". It cost £100,000 to do up (£50,000



Heather Mills in the kitchen of her Soho flat, which she is selling for £395,000. The actress and anti-landmine campaigner says the conversion was extremely stressful

HOUSE OF THE WEEK

more than she had expected) and is now on the market for £395,000.

Ms Mills, who is no relation to Sir John, Hayley or Kula Shaker's vocalist, Crispin, designed most of the flat herself, down to the steel door frames, the hidden lighting and the mini radiators which skirt each room. It is the detail that is most impressive: the kitchen counter is made from green wood and purple, chipped acrylic, the coloured glass bricks on which it rests light up at night. On the other side of the kitchen she shows me a vast two-metre sink, big enough to wash a sheep in.

The bathroom has a wonderful large bath, a double stainless-steel basin and a seat by the shower. "so I can perch my bum there when I haven't got my leg on", she says. But the brightly coloured tiles on the floor are already worn and peeling. The stairs inside are curry and chic with in-built lights, but the steps leading up to the flat are simply bare, paint-splashed floorboards.

Ms Mills has created the perfect space for a couple who do not just want to be where "it" is at; they want "it" to be visible from the roof terrace. In the early 1980s, the only sort of person who would have considered spending that much money on a Soho flat would have woken up at tea-time, would never have taken off his shades and would have had more girls' telephone numbers than a super-efficient WI secretary. In the 1990s, things have changed. Residents' groups put pressure on the council and the sex industry was given an overhaul. Although the area has a drug problem, the streets are safer and cleaner than they were ten years ago.

Although there was enough space to turn the flat into a three-bedroom pad, Ms Mills chose to create one large bedroom and an entertaining area. "I don't like having people to stay," she says, "and I knew they couldn't if I only had one bedroom. "I thought that because it's in Soho I should do it in a minimalist style, but actually I like cosiness and clutter."

The bedroom is deliberately stark, with a potentially back-breaking futon in the middle. A dressing room — large, with extensive cupboard space — ensures that the polished wooden floors are not littered with laundry. "I've spent my whole life living out of black bin-liners and I decided that I'd had enough," says Ms Mills, who spent some of her teenage days living on the streets.

She opens one of the cupboards. I try to look natural as she shows me her spare leg. "Ere's me false," she shouts. The roof terrace — from which you can spot the east of theatreland and clock the salivating gentlemen slipping out of Raymond's Review Bar — still has a thin, leaded floor. "I planned to deck it out in wood and then put a glass dome up high and turn the space into a bedroom," says Ms Mills, "but I'll leave all that to the next owners."

The flat is perfect for parties. "Once we got 60 people in here, two DJs and a pianist with a synthesiser in the living room," she says, admitting that these days she tends to socialise with producers, directors and writers.

So why is she leaving now after so much hard work? "It sits empty all week," she says. "My television commitments mean that I'm in London less and less." She plans to look for a smaller place in town and to spend more time at her beach house in Southampton. Ms Mills's life is so busy, I would not be surprised if her Filofax demanded a holiday. She has been working for the landmine cause since 1991. "I do it for selfish reasons, it makes me feel good," she says.

She goes to Bosnia every eight weeks for meetings with ministers and she has just completed the script for her autobiography which has been optioned for a film. "It is only five years since I wrote the book," she says, "but what I really want to do is find the time to write another which will be called *Don't Do Up a Place and Never Get Involved With Builders*".

Agents: Knight, Frank 071-629 8171. Heather Mills's web site can be found at www.heathermills.org

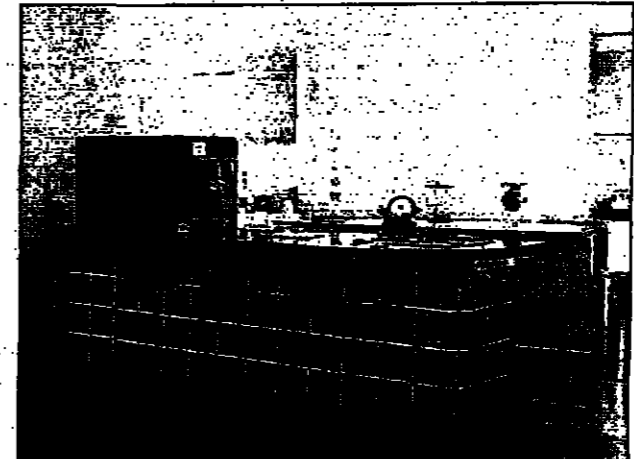
SOHO'S COLOURFUL but disreputable image was substantially cleaned up during the late 1980s by Westminster Council. It remains a vibrant and fairly cosmopolitan area, however, where anything goes. The attractions are manifold: bounded by Oxford Street to the north, Regent Street to the south and Charing Cross Road to the east, Soho is about as near as you can get to the cultural centre of the capital. It boasts an abundance of restaurants, bars, clubs, street markets, cinemas, theatres and shops, and the street life is nothing if not buzzing. Do not move there if you want early nights or green spaces, though.

The residents are a diverse bunch, including long-time locals, social housing occupants, retirees, young City professionals and well-heeled second-homers. It has also become increasingly international; these days, as well as the long-established Chinese community there is also a thorough mix of Europeans and Americans.

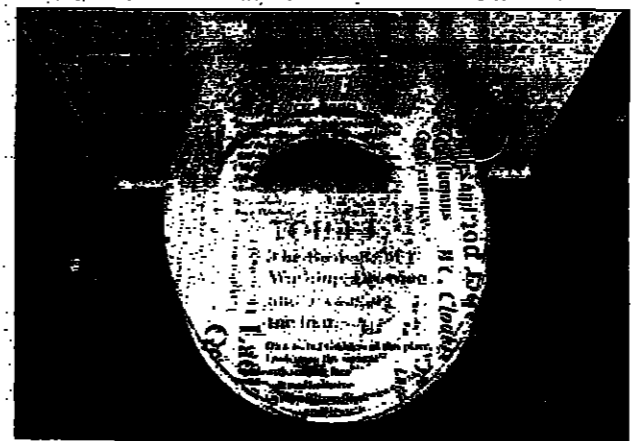
Not surprisingly, Soho is not family territory: most of the housing stock comprises flats; many of them are above shops, although in recent years smarter apartments have proliferated, for example the warehouse-style units at 63 Beak Street and the Soho Lofts scheme in Wardour Street. There are also one or two newbuild projects such as that in Bourchier Street. Lesa Green, of



The flat is full of striking details. The modern, clean bathroom features a seat in the shower, lots of floor space and a funky toilet seat, right



Illuminating idea: the deceptively simple kitchen counter is built on glass "bricks" which light up at night



A potentially back-breaking futon complements the minimalist design of the bedroom

HOME SWAP

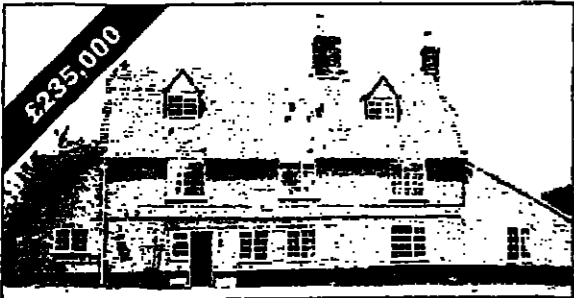
THE MILLENIUM site on the Greenwich Peninsula has centred attention on Greenwich and Blackheath, pushing up property prices 35 per cent in the past two years. Prices are still rising, but slowly. Improved transport links, including the Docklands Light Railway and the Jubilee Line extension, due for completion by 2000, are bolstering values. A small period terraced house in west Greenwich starts at £200,000. Closer to Charlton a three-bedroom Victorian terraced house costs from £135,000.

The Forest of Bowland, south of Lancaster, is popular with commuters from Lancaster and Manchester looking for family homes. A three-bedroom terraced house on the outskirts can be had from £60,000. Detached four-bedroom stone-built period cottages and farmhouses cost from £170,000 to £250,000, according to estate agent Fisher Wrathall.

You can still get a lot of house for your money in rural Norfolk. Villages around the old town of Dereham, such as Beeston and Brisley, offer good value. For £100,000 you can buy a three to four-bedroom detached Victorian cottage; about £200,000 buys a country house with stables, outbuildings and a few acres of paddocks.



For £235,000 you can buy this two-bedroom three-storey period terraced house, with a southwest-facing garden, in Prior Street, West Greenwich. (Winkworth, 0151-852 0999)



Spend the same sort of money (£235,000) in Cumbria and you can afford Lowfield, a detached four-bedroom turn-of-the-century house in 1.8 acres of garden and paddocks, near the Forest of Bowland and Lancaster. It comes with a coach house, stables and garaging. (Fisher Wrathall, 01524 68822)

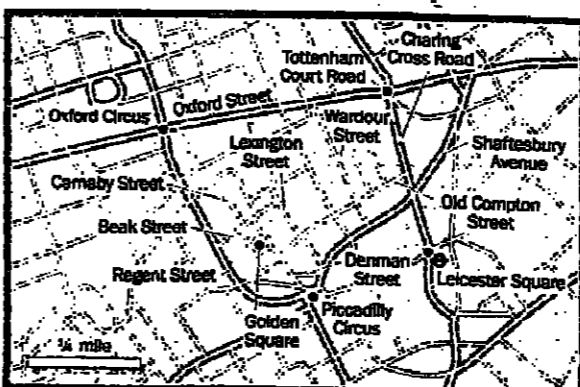


For even less (£230,000), you can become the proud owner of Manor Farm, a seven-bedroom, six-reception room, 18th-century house, in Brisley, near Dereham. The price includes stables, barns and nine acres of formal lawned gardens and paddocks. (Brown & Co, 01328 856888)



Ms Mills after the accident in which she lost a leg

MARKET COMMENT: SOHO



estate agent Knight Frank points out that it is some thing of a two-tier market: at the top end, penthouses and large apartments command huge premiums (£24 million for the 5,000sq ft Soho Loft penthouses, for instance) and usually have special features which add considerable value — car parking, a roof terrace or fine views. Then there is a solid market in small flats which are bought as weekday bases or rental investments.

Prices for new conversions range from £300 to £400 or more per square foot, which might typically translate into £325,000 for 750sq ft. The more popular roads are concentrated on the western side of Soho, according to Ms Green, and include Wardour, Beak and Lexington streets and Golden Square. FAITH GLASGOW

SOHO'S COLOURFUL but disreputable image was substantially cleaned up during the late 1980s by Westminster Council. It remains a vibrant and fairly cosmopolitan area, however, where anything goes. The attractions are manifold: bounded by Oxford Street to the north, Regent Street to the south and Charing Cross Road to the east, Soho is about as near as you can get to the cultural centre of the capital. It boasts an abundance of restaurants, bars, clubs, street markets, cinemas, theatres and shops, and the street life is nothing if not buzzing. Do not move there if you want early nights or green spaces, though.

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Advertisement for Somerset and Absolut. The top part features the word 'Somerset' in a stylized font. Below it is an advertisement for 'Absolut' with the text 'Bright Absolut' and 'Summery 2 bedroom apartments for...'. The bottom part of the advertisement shows a building and some text that is partially obscured.

The grandest chunk of scenery in Wales, with two estates, is for sale, writes Ronald Faux

Your own rocky mountain high



Richard Williams with Mt Snowdon and waterfall behind him

What price a natural masterpiece admired by millions, tramped and sweated upon each year by tens of thousands, dating from the mists of time, irreplaceable and immovable? That is a question facing Richard Williams who owns the southern flank of Snowdon, the highest point of England and Wales, inherited from his grandfather as a hill farm and now cherished among the grandest chunks of mountain scenery in the land.

healthy bottom line. Mr Williams is lean, dark, wiry and Welsh, and at 32 has developed his grandfather's shrewd eye for business. Prys Williams died in 1988, leaving his three estates to Richard who put two parts of his inheritance on the market in order to concentrate on the third, which was farm land on Anglesey. He wants to spend more time with his family, he says, and pursue other interests.

'You're for ever looking over your shoulder to see which agency is coming up your drive'

owner of sitting on the top of Snowdon and thinking: "From here as far as I can see, everything is mine."

The Hafod-y-Llan estate terminates on the 3,577ft summit of Snowdon and has been worked by 14 generations of the Williams family; 4,118 gloriously steep acres, grazed by sheep, hunted over by hounds and beloved by townies who go there to relax, recreate and rest their eyes on scenery that changes with every shift of light and cloud. The neighbouring estate of Gelli Iago, another tract of rock and moorland, is included in the sale and covers the sharply pointed summit of Cnicht, known as "the Matterhorn of Wales". Offers in excess of £3 million are invited.

On the day of our meeting, clouds hung low over Llyn Gwynant, dark as funeral drapes with rain pouring from them in vertical sheets. Snowdon was blotted out. "Not the perfect day to find a buyer for a place like this," Mr Williams concedes. The news that morning was full of agricultural gloom. According to the radio, the bottom was about to fall out of hill farming, although the books for Hafod-y-Llan and Gelli Iago show a

ever looking over your shoulder to see which agency is coming up your drive," Mr Williams says.

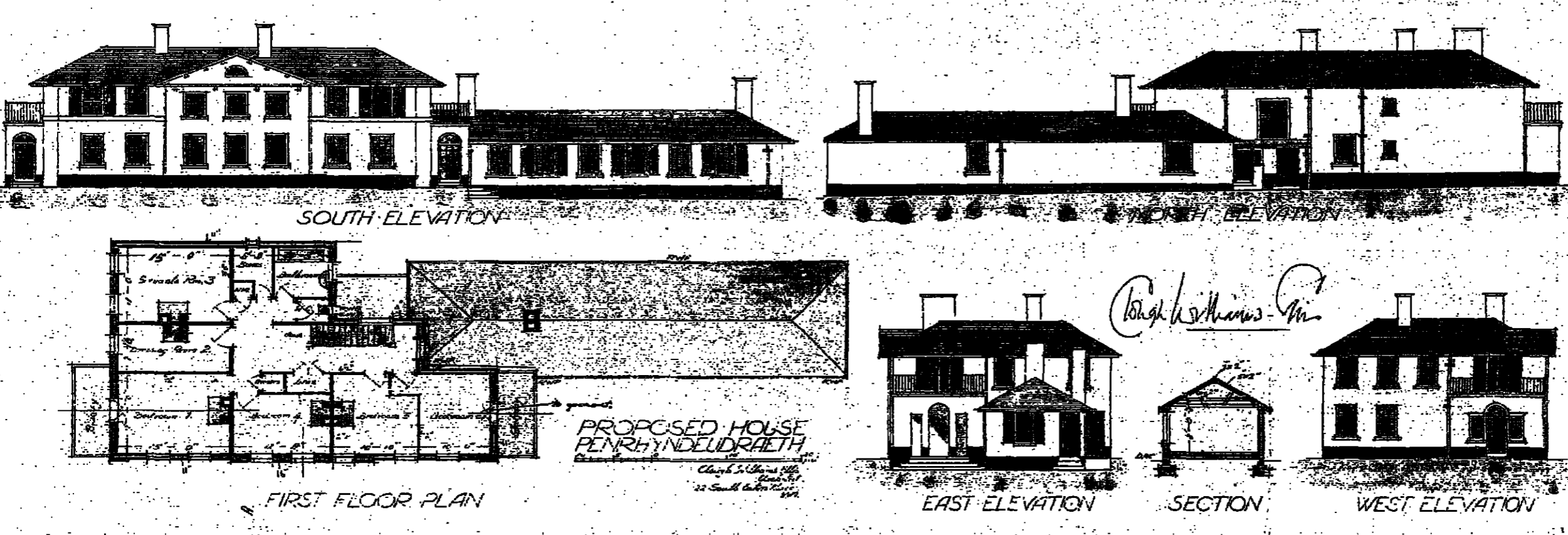
Prys Williams inherited the flank of Snowdon from his father, who once ran a shop on the summit of the mountain, selling sheepskins to tourists. The shop is no longer there, but six flocks of Welsh mountain sheep, selectively bred by the Williams family at Hafod-y-Llan for more than 300 years, are included in the sale.

For much of the rural lobby that is a chilling thought and it has galvanised the National Trust to take action. It was reported this week that the trust has begun negotiating to buy the estates. "We are into detailed discussions and we are extremely hopeful," said Carys Howell, the trust's public affairs manager for the area. "We have not yet secured an agreement, however."

According to Carter Jonas, the selling agents, part of the attraction of this particular property would be the excitement for an

traced by the majesty of a region where George Borrow declared, with Victorian eloquence, that nature showed herself in her most grand and beautiful forms. No other corner of Europe moved Hilaire Belloc with the awe and majesty of great things as did the mass of the northern Welsh mountains. Snowdon has long been a mecca for fell walkers, rock climbers and every kind of outdoor enthusiast. Many public paths cross the estate, which would remain open whoever owned the land: Sir Edward Watkin, who had the Hafod-y-Llan estate in 1889, made a three-and-a-half-mile pathway to the summit, free for ever for public use, which remains the most popular route up the mountain. William Gladstone, the Prime Minister, opened it in 1892 as a crowd of 2,000 heard the combined strains of Carmarthen and Porthmadoc sing *Land of my Fathers*. Gladstone, then aged 84, made a speech regarding the "Land question in Wales" but forgot to make any mention of the path. The statesman, however, is remembered at a landmark now known as the Gladstone rock. A plaque marks the spot where he made his speech. Mr Williams points out that whoever owns the land, public access is assured under agreement with the Countryside Council. "The important thing is that the land is farmed as efficiently as possible," he says. "It would be nice if that was done by a Welshman."

Agents: Carter Jonas, 12a St George Street, Hanover Square, London W1R 9DE (0171-629 7158).

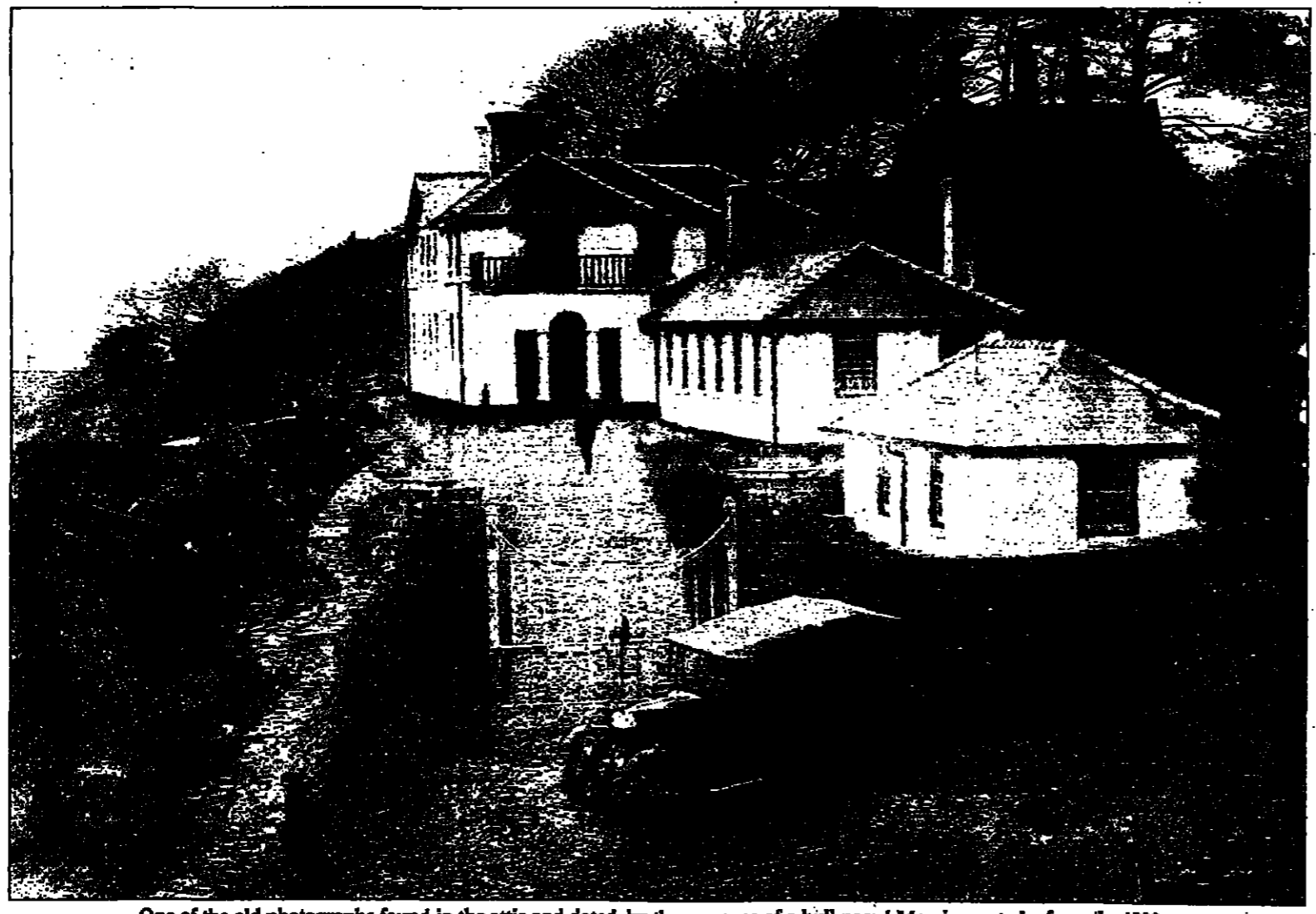


Sir Clough Williams-Ellis's original drawings for the house at Portmeirion; he believed that carefully designed and positioned buildings could enhance the beauty of an already attractive site, which he tried to prove here

Designed with freedom of thought

Rachel Kelly visits a piece of the Med in Wales

Many people will know of Portmeirion — on the Dwyryd estuary in North Wales — as the place where the cult television show *The Prisoner* was filmed, but not all of them will have heard of its architect, Sir Clough Williams-Ellis. Even fewer will know that the eminent Welshman also built individual houses — one of which is now up for sale. Sir Clough was fascinated by the effect of placing man-made objects on the landscape. He believed that carefully designed and positioned buildings could enhance the beauty of an already attractive site, a theory he tried to prove with Portmeirion. He also made his point with Mardir, a house three miles from the village of Penrhyn-deudraeth in Gwynedd, which has now come up for sale for £160,000. It is just a mile from Portmeirion. Less well known are the private houses which he designed during his years of architectural practice. At about the same time he was laying down the plans of his most famous work in the 1920s, Sir Clough was commissioned to design the house for a general practitioner for use as a home and a surgery. It is uncanny how the house, with hints of the Mediterranean in its whitewashed walls, French windows, Greek entrance porch and balcony, fits in so well with the Welsh landscape. Even on a dull day, the brightly coloured buildings remind one of long, sun-drenched days by blue seas. Following the death of the first owner, Dr Rees, in 1946, another doctor tried running the property as a smallholding to supplement the income from his medical practice. This did not prove a success and after a few years the GP



One of the old photographs found in the attic and dated, by the presence of a bull-nosed Morris car, to be from the 1920s

In 1952 the house was taken on by David Watson, another doctor who also took over the medical practice. It is now being sold by his son, David. "Visitors are always impressed by the wide vistas to be enjoyed from nearly every room, particularly the drawing room and main bedroom," says Mr Watson. "From all five bedrooms one can see across the river to the hills of the Harlech dome, with Harlech castle on the skyline." The house is ideal for entertaining with its beautifully proportioned drawing room, large patio windows, spacious

equipped with gas-fired Aga, adds Mr Watson. One part of the house betrays its past with a consulting room, dressing room, dispensary, waiting room and toilet. This wing could be used for holiday lets or converted into a granny flat. The gardens occupy about 1½ acres and the seclusion comes as a surprise when the village shops are only a two-minute walk away. A large outbuilding beside the front drive, which once housed a generator, might make a workshop. A patient Mr Watson recalls visiting was a tall, elderly man

yellow socks. It was Sir Clough Williams-Ellis. "I found him to be a most amiable character, I particularly remember his excitement when he told me that he had just been awarded a knighthood at the age of 90." He always showed an interest in the house and gave advice on the colour scheme, Mr Watson says. That scheme can still be seen, even down to the fiery red loggia by the front door. "My parents grew so fond of the house that they would not

BUILDING A DREAM

BORN in 1893 in Northamptonshire, Sir Clough Williams-Ellis showed an early passion for architecture which led him to set up his own practice in 1905 after only three months of formal training. In 1908 his father handed him control of the family property of Plas Bronanw in Merionethshire, four miles from where he would later build Portmeirion. It remained his country home for the rest of his life.



Patrick McGoochan, star of cult TV show *The Prisoner*

After military service, Sir Clough showed great interest in the control of urban development, supporting the Garden City movement and the Council for the Preservation of Rural England. He was also closely involved with the development of Stevenage, the first "New Town". Such work led to legislation that established green belts around cities. Sir Clough's dream of developing his own site in order to express his ideas led him to explore the British coast during the early 1920s. It is remarkable that he found his ideal place so near home, a peninsula upon which was a large house with stables and two cottages. The buildings were dilapidated and the grounds had become a jungle, but by 1926 he was welcoming his first guests at the house, which had become the Portmeirion hotel. The building of Portmeirion went on over two main periods, 1926-1939 and 1954-1972. Few of the buildings ever had detailed plans. Sir Clough stating that they "just grew". He was awarded a CBE in 1958 and a knighthood for services to architecture and the environment in 1971. When Sir Clough died in 1978, he considered Portmeirion "substantially complete". Today it is run by his family.



Sir Clough Williams-Ellis, architect of Portmeirion

AN EXCLUSIVE SAVE PARIS THE GUIDES INCLUDE

A first degree in home ownership

University years are the ideal time to help your child buy their own house, writes Diana Wildman

The start of the academic year looms, and undergraduates face the perennial problem of obtaining student accommodation. A lucky few, however, will find themselves in the strange position of being a landlord as, under the encouragement of their parents, they become first-time homeowners.

This is a huge step for a student to take, but with practical support and careful financial planning it can offer a good opportunity to get on to the housing ladder. Many parents or grandparents are only too happy to pay a deposit, or there may be some inherited money which can be used.

With the average student rent these days at more than £45 a week, some parents regard a deposit of £5,000 as the equivalent of paying the total student rent upfront.

Tim Reynolds, 27, a project manager with IBM, moved into a spacious two-bedroom flat in Chiswick, West London, earlier this year. He admits that the £10,000 he cleared after the sale of the house he owned while at university in Southampton was a big help.

Mr Reynolds lived in digs for the first two years of his four-year business technology course (which began in 1991), paying £40 a week. But after the first year he went to his parents with a plan to buy his own home and they agreed. It was during the depths of the recession and he paid £65,000 for a four-bedroom, three-reception Edwardian house ten minutes' walk from college.

Says Tim: "I moved in during the 1993 summer vac and spent three months renovating and redecorating. I turned two of the reception rooms into more bedrooms and ended up with five fellow students each paying £42 a week plus a share of the household bills.



The five-bedroom house that Holly Reynolds's parents helped her buy for £85,000

"My father lent me the deposit, but the house and mortgage were in my name. Dad had to be the guarantor. I took on all the running costs and a £400 monthly mortgage, which were easily covered by the rent.

"I graduated in 1995 and decided to continue letting to students as I wanted to avoid the hassle of moving to London as well as trying to sell in the continuing recession. I got a job in the City and rented a bedsit, but I found being an absentee landlord an enormous hassle. I was trying to build up a career and it was awkward dealing with blown fuses over the telephone at the office. So I sold in September 1996 for £80,000. As a business deal it was definitely worth it. I lived rent-free for two years. But I did have to cope with the responsibility of home-ownership at an early age."

Mr Reynolds's parents, who live in Oxfordshire, decided to give their daughter Holly, now 25, the same opportunity to get on the housing ladder. After she had completed her first year at Cirencester's Royal Agricultural College, they helped her to buy a five-bedroom town-centre terraced house for £85,000.

They paid the deposit and arranged a mortgage with the property registered in all three names. Five years on, the house is now in Ms Reynolds's



Holly Reynolds, above with her former flatmates, avoided the usual student accommodation problems. She still rents the house out to students

sole name and she has just arranged a new fixed-rate mortgage with the Midland.

With the house now valued at £120,000, Ms Reynolds has no plans to sell, and may move back at a later date. She still rents to five students who each pay £45 a week. She says: "I work locally, but cannot afford to live there as I don't want to live with four others again. But the rental not only pays for all the outgoings, but also helps with my share of the small flat I rent with a friend."

"Each summer, when the students move out, I move in to clean and redecorate for the

next lot, which is both tiring and time-consuming. I am well organised and keep a separate bank account for all income and expenditure."

Students who own their own homes tend not to sell for at least a couple of years after leaving university. Subject to certain criteria, there should be no capital gains tax due for three years after the owner moves out.

Trevor Kent, of the National Association of Estate Agents, has a few tips. He says: "Buying to give a student rental



income requires a different approach because that income needs to be maximised. So the more bedrooms the better. Students are out a lot, so you only need one reception room, however big the house. One bathroom is fine, but do have a separate loo and, if possible, a shower room. Try to be within walking distance of the college. And remember it is far more expensive to buy in Bristol, Oxford or Reading than, say, Liverpool or Sheffield, even though weekly rents don't differ that much."

Graham Wilby of the Woolwich says: "We do lend to

enable a student to purchase a property with parents as guarantors or joint owners. The ability to pay the mortgage is based on the parents' income and assets rather than the projected student rental. We do recognise that although the purchase is for owner-occupation, it is also an investment purchase and we would want a 25 per cent deposit."

Matthew Kent, 27, lived in the two-bedroom flat his parents, David and Sue, bought during his three years at Oxford Brooks University. He only recently moved out because his first job after gradu-

ating in 1993 was in nearby Abingdon. His parents, who live in North London, paid £62,000 in 1990 and the flat is now for sale through Oxford agent Adkins, for £95,000.

David Kent says: "Even in 1990 you could rent a single room for £55 a week, so it made financial sense. We bought the flat in Matthew's name, but were guarantors to protect all our interests. The flat has not only paid for itself, but saved years of rent and looks set to make Matthew a substantial capital gain. He is getting married next year, so the sale is extremely timely."

Diary of a househunter

MONDAY
Buying this flat with subsidence is a nightmare. Guarantees, builders certificates and trips to the council are exhausting.

TUESDAY
Am getting cold feet. If it is this difficult to buy, what will it be like to sell in a few years' time?

WEDNESDAY
Apparently, houses with subsidence are prone to geopathic stress, a New Age friend says. She suggests phoning a specialist psychic who will advise me for free.

THURSDAY
Get through to the psychic. He tells me not



to buy the flat, that it has appalling geopathic stress and the family will fall ill if we live there. I remember my mother's story about her friend who was found dead in the fish pond after buying a house with subsidence.

FRIDAY
Still not brave enough to tell my husband about the warning. He hates hocus pocus. I call the agent and ask for another viewing. "Are you having second thoughts?" she asks. I say yes. "I was thinking of you when I measured up a flat in the same road. The old lady who owns it has lived there for 17 years." The psychic told me to look for a place where someone had lived for many years.

EMMA MAHONY

Next week: a new offer on this old lady's flat

THE SUNDAY TIMES

IT'S TRUE EVERYONE'S OUT TO GET THEM.

Tomorrow, The Sunday Times investigates the X-Files phenomenon: the facts; the fantasy; the future. Don't miss your free 40-page magazine.

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EXCLUSIVE OFFER

Summer Mosimann

Menu

MAKE YOUR RESERVATION PLEASE CALL

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The sounds of silence



Ruth Gledhill joins an all-night vigil by bishops in Canterbury

BISHOPS at the Lambeth conference in Canterbury were taking a recess from meetings to enter the silence of an all-night vigil. This was led by Jean Vanier, founder of L'Arche network of communities for people with disabilities.

I watched from a mosque-like gallery, the view partially obscured by a curtain. In the suffocating heat, and with impossible acoustics, I experienced a tiny fraction of the frustration and exclusion suffered by disabled people to a far greater degree every day of their lives.

Mr Vanier described the assembled bishops, archbishops and their wives and husbands as the "good shepherds of the Anglican communion". He made special mention of those who had come from countries where they faced daily persecution. He said he was there as the voice of people who have no voice. "People with mental handicaps, disabilities, are among the most oppressed people of our world, and I have visited institutions, asylums which are really places of death."

Mr Vanier founded the first L'Arche community in France in 1964. Today, there are more than 100 communities in 29 countries, serving people with disabilities as well as catering to their spiritual development.

After Mr Vanier's address, we sang hymns and heard responses from bishops from Puerto Rico, Bangladesh and Massachusetts. There was instrumental music, and a mime performance by members of the L'Arche community in Canterbury. This was followed by a "service of light".

There were Bible readings. "You are the light of the world," we heard from Matthew's gospel. "A city built on a hill cannot be hid." And from 2 Corinthians: "It is not ourselves that we proclaim; we proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants, for Jesus' sake."

Many bishops, in the spirit of the all-night vigil which followed, and to sustain a sense of spirituality, and prayer through the debates to come, were fasting.

Those who ate dinner ate in silence, before proceeding to a "service of reconciliation" which included a liturgy of foot washing, a traditional biblical symbol of service. Many bishops and their spouses washed each other's feet.

A prayer watch was maintained throughout the night in St Augustine's Hall. Afterwards, Mr Vanier described the service as a celebration — essentially a celebration of reconciliation, humility and love, and the love of Jesus. In washing one another's feet, Christians were learning about forgiveness. It was a lesson the bishops would be in great need of in the difficult days to come at Lambeth.

Jean Vanier washes the feet of Dr George Carey

AT YOUR SERVICE

★ A five-star guide ★

★ CELEBRANT: Mr Jean Vanier

★ ARCHITECTURE: Hot, horrible sports hall

★ ADDRESSES: Reflection on holiness ★ ★ ★ ★

★ SPIRITUAL HIGH: Washed away some footsoresness ★ ★ ★

★ LITURGY: Creative use of silence ★ ★ ★

★ MUSIC: Be still, other worship songs and instrumentals ★ ★ ★

★ AFTER-SERVICE CARE: Glimmerings of hospitality ★

No women, please, we're British

All 11 women bishops at Lambeth were foreign, says Ruth Gledhill

After women priests and homosexuality, the next debate threatening to disrupt the spiritual calm of the Church of England is expected to be women bishops.

The conduct of and reception given to the 11 women bishops at the Lambeth conference, the meeting of the 750 bishops and archbishops of the Anglican communion which takes place every ten years and which ended yesterday in Canterbury, has strengthened the case for women bishops in England.

Supporters of women priests want England to follow the example set by America, New Zealand and Canada and bring forward legislation for the consecration of women bishops by the millennium.

Their favoured candidates would include Canon June Osborne, canon treasurer at Salisbury cathedral, and the Ven Judith Rose, Archdeacon of Tonbridge in Kent, a member of the General Synod and of the influential Crown Appointments Commission.

The Right Rev Mark Santer, Bishop of Birmingham, said: "I'm sure I am not the only person who has been surprised at how we have hardly noticed the women bishops here at Lambeth, not because they have been ignored, but because they have been accepted here naturally. Like male bishops, they are a mixed bunch and some of them are very impressive indeed."

The *eminentis grise* of the Lambeth 11 was the Right Rev Barbara Harris, the colorful, chain-smoking suffragan bishop of Massachusetts. She was consecrated in February 1989



The 11 bishops at the Lambeth conference. Supporters of women priests want England to follow the example set by America and Canada

as the first woman bishop in the Anglican communion. When she turned up at the last Lambeth ten years ago, before her consecration, her presence caused an unholy row. This time she was hardly noticed.

"It's been nine years since my consecration and it seems a very long time," she said. "I was lonely at first, but the next year Bishop Penny Jamieson was consecrated in New Zealand and with each successive consecration of another woman bishop I have felt my own episcopate strengthen."

There are now eight women bishops in the Episcopal Church of the United States. The most recent to be consecrated was the Right Rev Chilton Knudsen who became Bishop of Maine in March. Bubbly and extrovert, she

spring to public notice in the opening service of the conference, when she became the first woman bishop to read prayers at the lectern of Canterbury cathedral. This prompted dark, conspiratorial mut-

terings that a little-known woman bishop, with an unusual name not immediately identifiable as feminine, had been chosen by service organisers in order to circumvent any possible objections in advance. But Bishop Knudsen was un-

terfazed and delighted in both the service and the subsequent conference. "Two congregations in my diocese oppose women's ordination and have agreed that I would not visit them and exercise a sacramental ministry. But they both love me a lot and I love them a lot," she said. "I would not be surprised if they come round."

Bishop Jamieson, the British-born Bishop of Aotearoa, was consecrated in June 1990 as the second woman bishop

in the Anglican communion and the first diocesan woman bishop. While she confesses to having found parts of the job difficult, she says this is nothing to do with being a woman. "No one should think it is all power and glory," she said. "There are a lot of difficult aspects and the Church does not always realise that."

The Right Rev Richard Harris, Bishop of Oxford, said the influence of women bishops at Lambeth had helped the cause of their supporters in England, but indicated that legislation to consecrate them here was unlikely for eight to ten years. This is because the church does not wish to drive into a corner, or to drive out completely, those who still oppose women's ordination.

'It's a tough job and if it were not, I would suspect I wasn't being allowed to do it properly'

Bishop Matthews, Bishop of Edmonton in Canada, agreed. "It is a tough job, and if it were not, I would suspect that I was not being allowed to do it properly. My consecration was the first time there was no protest at an ordination of a woman in Canada." One of the most moving stories was told by Bishop Gerylyn Wolf, Bishop of Rhode Is-

I imagine that you are walking down the street. A group of teenagers is coming your way. Apart from them the street is empty — no one to call on for help. Would it make a difference to your feelings were you to know that they have just come out of church?

Yes, is the likely answer. You see, religion does change the world because it changes us. In most cases it makes us gentler than we would be otherwise. It places virtue on the agenda in a way few other things do today. Religious faith reminds us that we are answerable for our conduct, that there are measures by which a life is judged other than fame, success or the satisfaction of desire.

More than two centuries ago Voltaire refused to let his friends discuss atheism in the presence of his servants. "I want," he said, "my lawyer, tailor, valets, even my wife to believe in God. I think that if they do I shall be robbed and cheated less."

Today, when infidelity hardly counts as a sin, when petty crime is rife, when football violence is predict-

Who to turn to in an age without sages?

able, can we say he was wrong? Religion is not just our personal encounter with God. It involves membership in a community. It means learning rules and restraints. It involves an ability to hear the words "Thou shalt not". When we are part of a religion we become heirs to the wisdom of many centuries. We learn that we, as individuals, are not all there is. That is why great religions have so often been the best defence of human dignity against the rule of power.

A year ago, for a few weeks, I asked friends to name three contemporary sages, people to whom they would look for guidance in troubled

times. In the past, the answers would have been the likes of Bertrand Russell, J.B. Priestley, or C.S. Lewis, because they had thought about the human situation, its history, literature and philosophy.

Who, today, would be their equivalents? Most people named Sir Isaiah Berlin, then still alive, but could not come up with another name. Yes, my friends admitted, ours is an age without sages.

For most of history, people have seen the importance of handing down to future generations their own experiences — and that of their ancestors — a experience often won at great cost. We call this wisdom. Most cultures have valued it because the cost of not heeding it is so high.

At the heart of most communities, at most times, has been the sage, the prophet, the person who brings to bear on the present the accumulated wisdom of the past, someone who

knows that if we choose this, that will be the outcome 50 years from now. Why, then, is ours an age without sages? Partly because we have convinced ourselves that all lives are equally valid, all lifestyles a matter of personal choice. And partly because we have come to the conclusion that previous generations have nothing to tell us.

This is false. Technology changes. The human drama does not. Something I always remember is: when all else fails, read the instructions. For most things we rely on someone else's guidance. If we do so to change an electric plug, why not in matters of greater consequence?

One of the great contributions of our faith traditions is that they preserve the wisdom of the past — in narratives, texts and, no less significantly, in rituals and prayers. Today our faith communities are the last refuge of the sage.

● Dr Jonathan Sacks is the Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth.

EXCLUSIVE OFFER THE TIMES

Summer lunch at Mosimann's for £95



Today *The Times* gives you the opportunity to lunch at Anton Mosimann's elegant private dining club in Belgravia, London. The lunch, created exclusively for *Times* readers, is on Saturday, August 22 at 12.30 for 1pm. The price of £95 per person includes a five-course meal, four champagnes and a Cape Mentelle Cabernet Merlot 1996.

Anton Mosimann is recognised as one of the world's most gifted chefs and has devised this unique menu to complement the summer season and the champagne of Veuve Clicquot, which is acknowledged as a leading Grande Maison de Champagne. A Veuve Clicquot representative will be at the lunch to talk about the house and their wines. Places are strictly limited so early booking is recommended. Mosimann's Dining Club is at 11b West Halkin Street, Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8JL.

TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION AT £95 PER PERSON PLEASE CALL 0171-235 9625
CHANGING TIMES

Church services tomorrow

- Ninth Sunday of Trinity**
ARMAH CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 M; A: Let thy merciful ears O Lord (Weeks), Mr D McGuckin.
- BANGOR CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 9.45 Cymru Bendigaid; 11 S Eucharist; 12.15 Eucharist; 3.15 Ch E; 5 Goshers; BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL: 9 MP; 11 Eucharist; Rev V Cory; 4 E.
- BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 9.15 10.30 S Eucharist; 11 S Eucharist; 12.15 Ch E; Here O my Lord (Whitlock); 4 Ch E; A: Behold O God our defender (Howells).
- BRECON CATHEDRAL:** 8 Eucharist; 11 Jazz festival; Rev F O'Brien; 12.15 Ch E (Nathaniel Patrick); Responses (Ayleward).
- BRISTOL CATHEDRAL:** 7.40 M; 8 HC; 10 Ch Eucharist; Darke in E; Canon J Simpson; 3.30 Ch E; Aston in F; A: O thou the central orb (Wood); Responses (Sanders).
- CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 9.30 M; 11 S Eucharist; Missa sancti Joannis de Deo (Haydn); Most Rev F O'Brien; 12.15 Eucharist memorial service; 3.15 E. Bairdson in D; 6.30 Compline, Archdeacon of Canterbury.
- CARLISLE CATHEDRAL:** 7.45 M; 8 HC; 10.30 S Eucharist; 11 S Eucharist; Professor A Main; 3 E; Wood in D; Responses (Rose).
- CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL:** 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 9.30 Eucharist; 11.15 Eucharist; Rev S Wood; 6 E; Rev J Moseley.
- CHESTER CATHEDRAL:** 7.45 L; 8 HC; 10 Eucharist; Missa in honorem sancti Josephi (Flor Peeters); Canon Dr RT Dennis; 11.30 M; Collegium regale (Howells); 6.30 ES; Canon M Cox.
- CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 10 M; Stanford in A; 11 S Eucharist; Ave verum (Mozart); Canon K Hobbs; 3.30 E; Wesley in E.
- CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL:** Dublin; 11 S Eucharist; Missa (Ives); 3.30 Ch E; Jesus service (Mattioli).
- CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL:** Oxford; 8 HC; 10 M; 11.15 S Eucharist; Missa brevis (Berkeley); The Lord is my shepherd (Berkeley); 3.30 Ch E.
- COVENTRY CATHEDRAL:** 7.40 MP; 8 C; 10.30 Eucharist; Coronation mass (Mozart); 3 German Lutherans; 5 Ch E; St Paul's service (Howells); A: For lo I raise (Stanford).
- DURHAM CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 10 M; Stanford in C; Canon M Kitchen; 11.15 HC; Collegium regale (Howells); 3.30 E; Responses (Ayleward).
- ELY CATHEDRAL:** 8.15 HC; Canon J Inge; 10.30 S Eucharist; Missa brevis capella Regalis (Cassini); Britan in C; Locusts (Bruckner); Canon D Green; 3.45 E; Wood in F.
- EXETER CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 9.45 S Eucharist; Ave Maria (Vaughan Williams); Canon K Parry; 11.15 M; Britan in C; 3 E; A: Lord I will know mine errand (Parry); 6.30 ES.
- GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 10.15 Eucharist; Darke in E; Rev J Hubbard-Jones; 12.15 HC; 3 E; Brewer in E; A: For lo I raise up (Stanford).
- GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 9.45 S Eucharist; Missa of the saint hour (Oldroyd); Canon J Dunfield; 11.30 M; Sunston in B; 11.45; 6.30 E; Noble in B minor.
- HEREFORD CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 10 Mass; 10.30 Sol Mass; 12 Mass; 3.30 Sol V & B; 6.30 ES.
- LEICESTER CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 10 M; 10.30 Eucharist; Sanctus Agnus (Palestrina); 4 EP.
- LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 10.30 S Eucharist; Mass for five voices (Byrd); Rev Prebendary M Harding; 3.30 E; Aston in F.
- LINCOLN CATHEDRAL:** 7.45 L; 8 HC; 9.30 S Eucharist; Messe solennelle (Langlais); 11.15 M; Stanford in C; 12.30 HC; 3.45 E; Dyon in D; Responses (Rose).
- LLANDAFF CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 9 C; Rev R L Ford; 11 S Eucharist; Mass of St Thomas (Theobald); Canon F Miller; 12.15 HC; 3.30 E; Stanford in C; O thou the central orb (Wood); 6.30 E; Rev R C Parrish.
- MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL:** 8.45 M; 9 Eucharist; 10.30 S Eucharist; Messe solennelle (Langlais); Surely thou hast passed (Rose); 3.30 E; Locusts (Bruckner); Collegium regale (Wood).
- NEWCASTLE CATHEDRAL:** 7.30 M; 8 HC; 9.30 S Eucharist; Metrical Gloria (Woodlands); Sanctus Agnus Dei (Shepherd); Canon P Strangus; 6 Ch E.
- NORWICH CATHEDRAL:** 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 9.15 Family C; 10.30 S Eucharist; Missa brevis (Gabrieli); Ave verum corpus (Elgar); Archdeacon of Norwich; 3.30 E; Sunston in C; 6.30 Eucharist; Ruyter (Lobell).
- PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL:** 7.45 M; 10.30 Eucharist; Vaughan Williams in G; 3.30 E; Stanford in A.
- PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 10 Eucharist; 10.30 S Eucharist; Fantasia in G (Bach); 6 E; Statham in E minor.
- RIPON CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 9.30 Eucharist; Rev D Murrell; 11.30 M; 12.30 Eucharist; 3.30 E.
- ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 9.45 M; Ireland in F; 10.30 S Eucharist; Venerable N Warren; 3.15 E; Gloucester service (Howells); Responses (Rose).
- SALISBURY CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 10 Eucharist; Messe solennelle (Langlais); Canon J Osborne; 11.30 M; Ireland in F; 3 Ch E; Dyon in D.
- SHEFFIELD CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 10 MP; 10.30 S Eucharist; Saeculorum Domini (Byrd); Darke in F; 6.30 E; Stanford in G.
- SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL:** 9 Eucharist; 11 S Eucharist; Missa (Haydn); Canon D Painter; 3 Ch E; Stanford in G.
- SOUTHWELL CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 10 M; L; 8 HC; 9.30 C; 11 S Eucharist; Darke in E; 3.15 E; Murrill in E; A: Mine eyes for beauty pine (Howells).
- TURSO CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 9 M; 10 S Eucharist; Locusts (Bruckner); 6 E; Stanford in G; A: I was glad (Parry).
- WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 9.15 C; 11 Sol Eucharist; Canon I Gaskell; 6.30 E.
- WELLS CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 9.45 S Eucharist; Canterbury mass (Piccolini); 11.30 M; 3 E; Dyon in D.
- WESTMINSTER ABBEY:** 8 HC; 10 M; Collegium regale (Howells); Canon D Gray; Ch S Eucharist; Ubi caritas (Dunfield); 3 E; Greater Love (Ireland); Canon J Richardson; 5.45 Organ recital; Nicholas King; 6.30 ES.
- WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL:** 7.8, 9 Mass; 10.30 Sol Mass; 12 Mass; 3.30 Sol V & B; 6.30 ES.
- WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL:** 8 HC; 10 M; Cabena in D; Canon K Walker; 11.15 S Eucharist; Darke in E; 3.30 E; Collegium regale (Howells); Responses (Hancock).
- YORK MINSTER:** 8.45 HC; 10 S Eucharist; Missa aedis Christi (Mauhaas); Venerable A Dean; 11.30 M; Stanford in B flat; 2 Normandy veterans' Association service; 4 E; Kelly in C; Very Rev R Furnell.
- ST ALBAN'S CATHEDRAL:** Hertfordshire; 8 HC; 9.30 Eucharist; 11 Sol Eucharist; Mass of the quiet hour (Oldroyd); 6.30 E; Stanford in C; A: Canute Domini (Paton).
- ST ASAPH CATHEDRAL:** Denbighshire; 8 HC; 11 Ch Eucharist; O for a closer walk (Ives); Very Rev K Coulstone; 3.30 EP.
- ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL:** Pembrokeshire; 8 HC; 9.30 Cymru Bendigaid; 11.15 Ch M; Stanford in C; 6 Ch E.
- ST FIN BARRÉS CATHEDRAL:** Cork; 8 Eucharist; 11.15 Ch Eucharist; Sunston in F; Let thy merciful ears O Lord (Mudd); Very Rev Dr M G St Jackson; 7 Ch E; Wood in G; A: 6.30 Sol; echo: Robin Mason; 8 ES.
- ST GILES CATHEDRAL:** Edinburgh; 8.10 HC; Missa brevis (Leighton); 11.15 MS; Jauchea dem Herrn (Mendelssohn); 6 St Giles at Six; echo: Robin Mason; 8 ES.
- ST MACHARS CATHEDRAL:** Old Aberdeen; 11 Youth festival service; Rev D Hawthorn; 6 Rev B Campbell.
- ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL:** Edinburgh; 8 Eucharist; 10.30 S Eucharist; Missa pange lingua (Vesque); 3.30 Ch E.
- ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL:** Dublin; 8.30 Eucharist; 11.15 S Eucharist; Three part mass (Byrd); Rev B F Loughrey; 3.15 Ch E; Dyon in G minor; A: O for a closer walk with God (Stanford).
- ST PAULS CATHEDRAL:** ECU; 8 HC; 10 M; Short service (Weekes); Rev J Halliburton; 11.30 S Eucharist; missa reges terrae (Mauhaas); Rev G Gilles; 3.15 E; A: Vadum et circubo civitatem (Victoria); 6 ES.
- RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL:** SW7; 10.30 Divine Liturgy; Kievan and traditional polyphony; Met Anthonny.
- ALL SAINTS:** W1; 9 LM; 10.20 MP; 11 HM; FARM STREET; W1; 8.30 LM; 11 HM; 12.30 LM; 4.15 Mass; 6.15 LM.
- HOLY TRINITY:** Sloane Street; 11 S Eucharist; 5 Sol E; Bishop M Marshall.
- HOLY TRINITY Brompton:** SW7; 9 HC; 11 M; Rev S Millar; 5.7.30 Informal service; THE BROMPTON ORATORY; SW7; 7.7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.30 Mass; 3.30 V & B; O Demine Jesu Christus (Palestrina); 4.30, 7 Mass.
- ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH:** W8; 11 Holy Communion; Rev M O'Brien.
- ROYAL HOSPITAL CHelsea:** 11 M; taste and see (Vaughan Williams); Responses (Ayleward); Canon P Good.
- WESLEY'S CHAPEL:** EC2; 9.45 HC; 11 MS; Rev J Moseley.
- WESTMINSTER CENTRAL HALL:** (Methodist); 11 MP; Rev Dr P Graves; 6.30 EP; Rev F Fletcher.
- ST ANNE AND ST AGNES:** (Lutheran); Orchestral St. EC2; 11 Ch Eucharist; Rev V Franz.
- ST BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT:** EC1; 9 HC; 11 M; Short service (Gibbons); 9.30 Ch E; Missa O rex gloriae (Palestrina); Rev M Thompson.
- ST BRIDES:** EC4; 11 Ch Eucharist; Stanford in B flat; A: Almighty and everlasting God (Gibbons); Canon J Oates; 6.30 Ch E; Sunston in G; Ascribe to the Lord (Howells).
- ST CLEMENT DANES:** WC2; 11 Ch M; Stanford in C; Rev D Mackenzie; 12.30 HC; ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND; SW7; 11; Very Rev J H McIndoe; 6.30; Rev D P Bush.
- ST ETHELDREDA'S:** EC1; 11 S Mass; Missa octavi toni (Croce).
- ST GEORGE'S:** W1; 8.30 HC; 11 S Eucharist; Short service (Batten).
- ST JAMES'S CHURCH:** W1; 9.15 HC; 11 S Eucharist; Rev M Robins; 5.45 EP.
- ST JAMES'S CHURCH:** W2; 10.30 S Eucharist; Missa secunda (Hassler); Rev A Meldrum; 6 EP.
- ST JOHN'S:** E15; 11 MP; Rev J Richards; 6.30 HC; Rev M Okeilo.
- ST LUKES:** SW3; 8 HC; 10 S Eucharist; Almighty and everlasting God (Gibbons); Rev C Keill-Davies; 6.30 E.
- ST MARK'S:** NW3; 8 HC; 9.45 Family C; 11 S Eucharist; Rev T Andrews.
- ST MARGARET'S:** SW1; 10 M; 11 S Eucharist; Rev Dr P Bradshaw.
- ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS:** WC2; 8 HC; 9.45 Eucharist; 11.30 Visitors Service; Rev M Johnson; 2.45 Chinese Service; Mr P Malik; 6 Ch E; 6.30 ES.
- ST MARY ABBOTS CHURCH:** W8; 8 HC; 9.30 Eucharist; 11.15 Ch M; Rev F Gelli; 12.30 HC; 6.30 E; Rev M Fuller.
- ST MARY'S:** SW1; 9 HC; 10 LM; 11 HM; Missa brevis (Berkeley); 6.30 E & B.
- ST MARY-THÉ-VIRGIN:** NW3; 10.30 Eucharist.
- ST MARYLEBONE:** NW1; 8 HC; 11 Ch Eucharist; Missa simile est regnum coelorum (Victoria).
- ST PAULS:** SW1; 8, 9 HC; 11 Sol Eucharist; Rev G Palmer.
- ST PETER'S:** SW1; 10 Family Eucharist; 11 S Eucharist; Missa se la face ay pale (Dufay); Rev I Johnson-Smith.
- GUARDS CHAPEL:** Wellington Barracks; SW1; 11 M; Hear my prayer (Purcell); A: Je-hova quam multi sunt Hostes mei (Purcell); Band of the Life Guards; Rev T A R Cole; 12 HC.

● Compiled by Deborah King.

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Trying to cool off: popular holiday resorts in the Med have recorded scorching temperatures this year and thousands of people, particularly British tourists, are reported to have suffered from heatstroke and burns

Cool Britannia sounds ideal

After fleeing our miserable summer, British holidaymakers are now hiding from the fierce temperatures in the Med. Steve Keenan reports

FIRST we were too cold. The terrible British summer sent us flocking to the Mediterranean — and now we are too hot. The summer holidays of thousands of Britons in the eastern Mediterranean have been ruined by record temperatures, causing a sharp increase in cases of heatstroke and burns. Queues of Britons have been reported at hospitals and pharmacies, while some have cut short their holiday to return home. Others have simply stayed in air-conditioned hotel rooms for hours at a time. The extreme weather has resulted in scorching temperatures this summer in popular holiday resorts such as Bodrum, Turkey, where 42.6C was recorded on Tuesday — 10C above the seasonal average. The Greek health ministry has urged people to stay out of the sun and to eat and dress lightly to avoid heatstroke, while air conditioners pushed electricity consumption in Greece to record levels. Teachers Steve Wright, 26, from Co Down, and Katie Mitchell, 25, from Hampshire, had intended staying longer on a tour of the Greek islands, but returned early to Gatwick on Wednesday. "The heat was just too intense," said Miss Mitchell. "Even when there was a breeze, it was just like standing in front of an open oven." Added Mr Wright: "At night you couldn't sleep. And during the day, you just didn't go out between 11am and 4pm." Ironically, record numbers of Britons have booked a Medi-

terranean holiday this year, desperate to escape the relentless cloud and drizzle of the British summer. However, despite a climb in temperatures here this week, most are completely unprepared for the extremes of the Med. The Turkish resort of Antalya hit 43C last month, the highest since records began 50 years ago. The 41.2C reached in Malta on the same day was also a record. Determined to enjoy their holiday, many Britons have ignored warnings and doctors have been swamped with emergency cases. Lindsey Carter and Vicki Lamb, both 20, from Upminster, Essex, said their two-week holiday in Cyprus became a fight for survival. "We saw one British girl who just collapsed in the heat and had to be taken to hospital where she was put on a drip," said Miss Lamb. Speaking at Gatwick after her return, Miss Carter said: "We started off by going to the beach every day, but we just couldn't take it." Added Miss Lamb: "A lot of the time we just stayed cooped up in our apartment because it was too hot to go out." Adam Price, 20, of Kidderminster, had just returned from Ibiza where he received hospital treatment for sunburn. "I was so starved of sun in Britain that I couldn't resist getting out into it," he said. Even though he used a high factor sunblock, his back was covered in blisters the day after a five-hour sunbathing session. He was sent to hospital by a doctor on call for Thom-



Happy to be home: the Watson family of Bromley, Kent

son Holidays, where he found staff exasperated by British tourists in similar conditions. "My doctor treated the burns as if it was an everyday occurrence. It was of no surprise to him," said Mr Price. "After hospital, I went to the pharmacy where I found a queue of British tourists wanting antibiotics and creams. They just couldn't cope with the heat." A spokeswoman for Columbus insurance said calls from holidaymakers to its medical assistance telephone number had risen by 10 per cent this week. "Without doubt there has been a high incidence of calls related to heatstroke and exposure," she said. "We are also seeing fewer calls about food poisoning, which suggests people are so unwell or listless that they are not eating anything." Cyprus is experiencing one of its hottest and most humid summers for years, with temperatures topping 40C. Some holidaymakers have been going home as lily-white as when they arrived. "It's just too hot to go out and when you do, you can't risk too much sun. I came with factor six suntan lotion and have not opened it — I went straight out and bought some factor 20," said Lauren, 20, of Clonmel, Ireland. Mike Watson, 45, his wife Marina, 40, and 12-year-old daughter Laura returned this week from Cyprus, where Mr Watson said they feared for their daughter in the heat. "It was our fifth time in Cyprus and was by far and away the worst we have known it.

You just didn't go out between 2pm and 4pm, it was as simple as that," he said. Mathilde Robert, managing director of Greek specialist Argo Holidays, said one couple had demanded to be moved from their apartment in Paphos, Cyprus, to a hotel room with air conditioning. They had paid for the upgrade themselves. An elderly Surrey couple, who had travelled with Sunvil Holidays to Sicily, chose to fly home early, unable to stand the heat. They had to pay for scheduled flights, unable to change the date of their charter flight home. The heatwave also extends to southern Italy. Annette Kuesner, 24, from Brixton, South London, went to Apulia with two friends. Although they had a villa, they found it unbearable to stay in their rooms at night and were forced to pitch camp under some trees by the coast. Greece and Italy have been experiencing forest fires, melting asphalt and smog levels in urban areas that are exceeding danger limits. Fires have smouldered in Umbria, where an entire forest near Perugia has been destroyed; a pine forest north of Athens has also been lost. And in southern Croatia on Thursday, a state of emergency was declared when forest fires killed two people and forced the evacuation of 350 foreign tourists. Additional reporting by Helen Rumbelow, Jeannette Hyde, Michael Theodorou, Gary Wright, Angus Clarke

Dr Peter Barrett, of the Medical Advisory Services for Travellers Abroad, has this advice for visitors to hot countries: Wear loose clothing. Cotton does not retain moisture and light-coloured clothing will help reflect the heat. Drink at least two to three litres of water each day. Moderate your alcohol intake — it will only dehydrate you further. Take breaks from the heat, especially at midday when the sun is strongest.

HOT TIPS

- Be wary of heat exhaustion, which can be caused by dehydration or lack of salt. But do not give extra salt to babies.
- Heatstroke can be fatal. Symptoms include getting hotter but not sweating, dizziness and headaches. Sufferers can quickly become delirious and fall unconscious, and may suffer from convulsions. Should you recognise these

symptoms, call an ambulance. Undress the sufferer and, if they are conscious, immerse them in water or cover them with wet bedding and fan them to encourage evaporation. Babies under six months old should not be exposed to direct sunlight. Make sure they are regularly hydrated, keep them in the shade and dress them in loose clothing. For written health advice, call Masta on 0891 224100 (premium rates).

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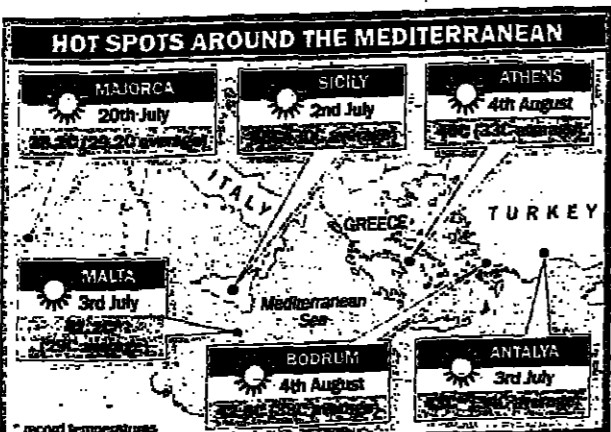
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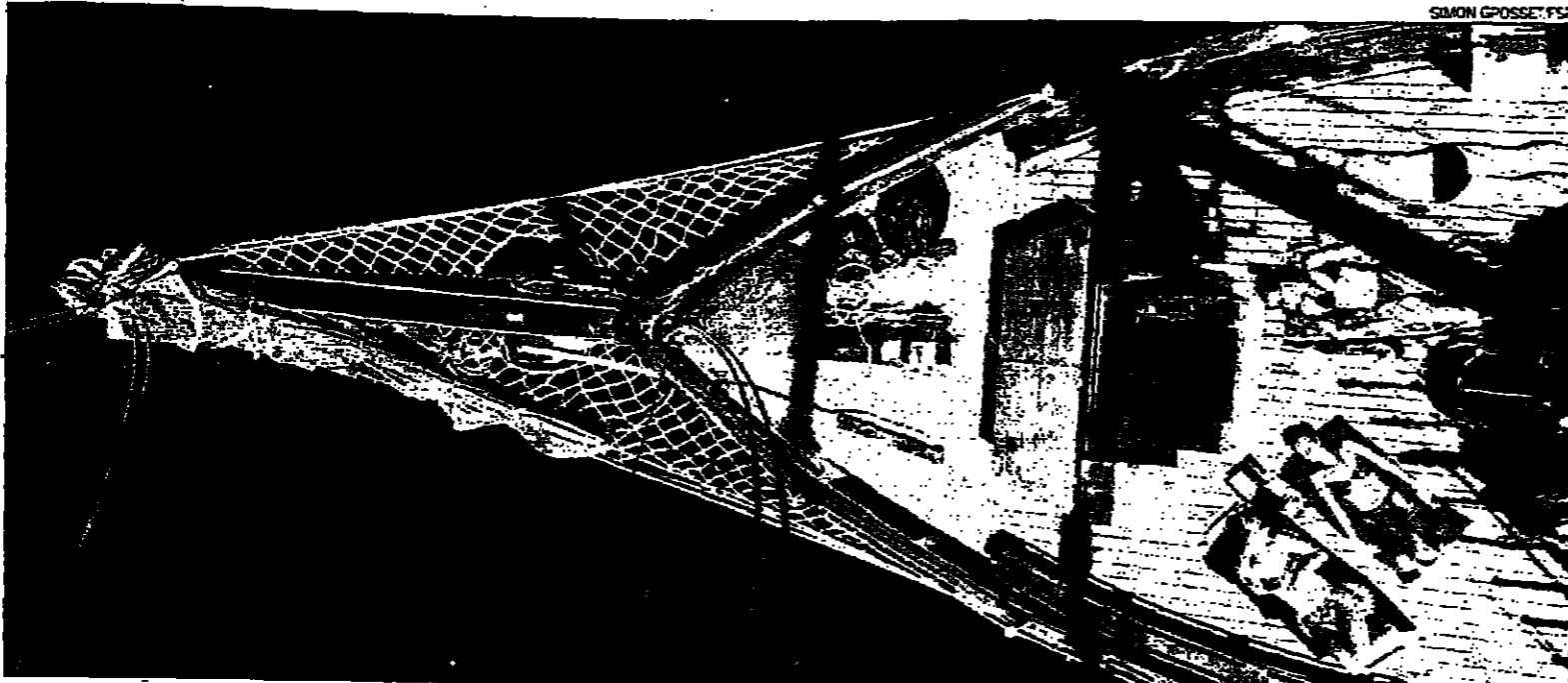
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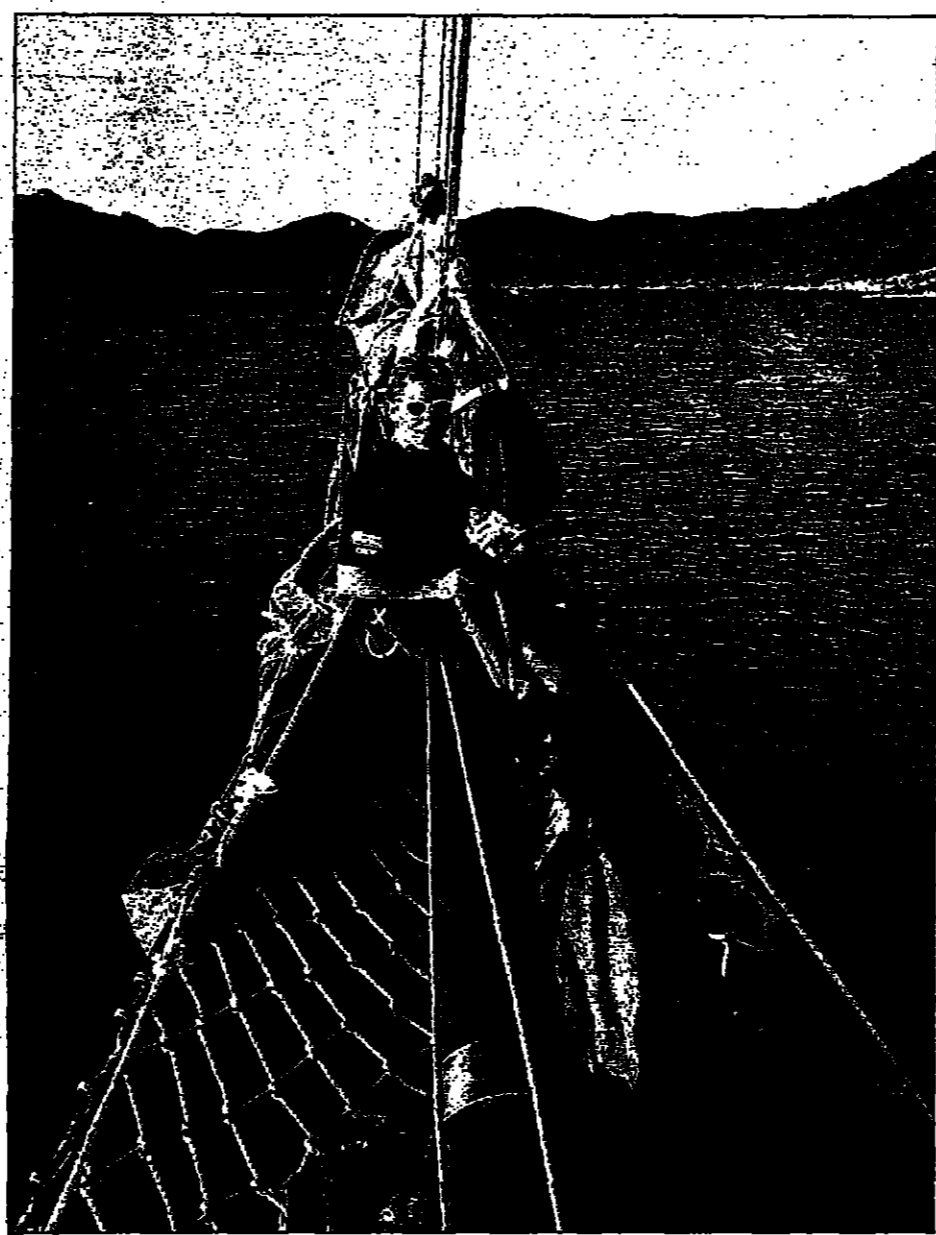
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Looking down on the deck of the Trekker. By the end of the trip everyone had made the climb to the crow's nest, 75ft up the mast



Captain the parrot, with the other captain, Bob, left, and helping with the work, one of the passengers on the bowsprit of the Trekker, right



Continued from page 24

Then it began to rain. At least it was warm rain. We stopped at Blue Pearl Bay, just round the corner from the exclusive Hayman Island resort. "Imagine if you'd paid £2,000 to stay on Hayman Island and it rained," said Bob, before telling us that it was so exclusive that a colleague of his who had taken Jimmy Barnes — an Australian rock star — had not been allowed to leave the jetty because he had not been wearing shoes. Meanwhile, the crew rigged an awning on Jack and we renamed the area the "Wesundays".

Captain James Cook was the first white explorer to discover the area. In 1770 he wrote: "The whole passage is one continued safe harbour." Cook was Bob's hero. "He's up there with the greatest genius of all time," he said, before showing me the navigation chart we were using today. It was based on the readings that Cook took in 1770.

Bob is an old sea dog, in the nicest of ways. He combines an encyclopaedic knowledge

with a colourful way of looking at things. Marine Stringers, fatally poisonous jellyfish found on the Queensland coast, were "like heavy trucks on the road," he said. "If you are worried you're going to hit one, you don't drive a car." On deck one night, he announced: "You can only see 6,000 stars with the human eye in the Southern Hemisphere." I did not like to ask how he knew, or if he had counted them.

BOB SET the tone of our holiday. His love was sailing, but he realised that "most passengers are here for the sails, not the sailing" — meaning people want the enjoyment of being on a nice ship without getting their hands dirty learning to sail it. To him, the ship represented a way of life from 50 years ago with its coils of rope, the work aloft and even the lack of winches to help the crew.

The next day dawned bright, warm and clear, but

with no wind. Reluctantly, Bob resorted to that "new-fangled invention", the engine, to get us the 17 miles to Bait Reef where we picked up a buoy (anchors are disallowed as they damage the reef) and prepared to dive on one of the wonders of the world.

Those who had dived before were amazed at what they saw. Those who had never dived, who were given an introduction by Greg, were in awe. There were brain and stag horn and waving fronds of coral everywhere in assorted shades of blue, yellow and red. There were trevally with yellow tails, parrot fish of mauve, purple and yellow and bright orange coral trout. Under the ship a giant hump-headed Maori wrasse sheltered its brown body in the cool shade, unconcerned by our comings and goings or even our close examination through diving masks.

After such a brilliant day we put one of Bob's sayings to the test. We felt like celebrating and, although it was only mid-afternoon, we followed

his line that "the beauty of this ship is that there's always somewhere you can stand where the sun's over the yard-arm", and opened the bar.

WE dropped anchor in Stonehaven Bay off Hook Island for the most fantastic sunset.

The sky went through an entire range of orange and blues, the islands in the distance losing their green tinge and turning to varying shades of grey and black.

The drinks continued to be poured and with them came stories of the Captain's exploits. He can be a restless animal and, since his wings are clipped, likes to climb the rigging by dragging himself up it with his beak and claws. He once helped himself to someone's glass of red wine, which led him to believe he could fly after all. He flapped 50 yards out to sea before giving up the struggle. He grabbed the rope that was thrown to him and was pulled

beak-first back to the boat where he sobered up while preening himself dry.

Nobody knows where he got his high-pitched pirate voice from or who taught him his lines. We learnt that if tickled behind his ear or under his wing he would laugh like a maniac before telling us to "Hoist the mainsails". Bob was trying to teach him other nautical terms from "Where are the heads?" (the toilets) to "Galley growler" (a loafing, grumbling crew member). The two captains were the stars of the Coral Trekker.

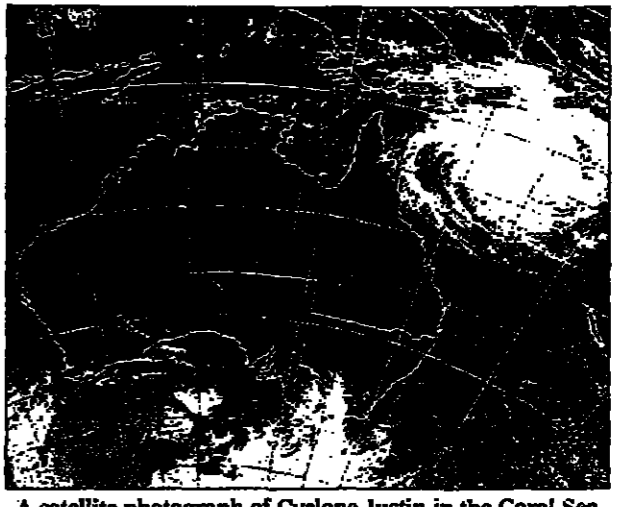
Jason Nissé never made it to the Whitsundays

Cyclone Justin spoilt my fun

Sitting in one of those impossibly trendy bars which seem to proliferate in Sydney, my friend was irritatingly enthusiastic. "Oh, the Whitsundays. They're beautiful," she smiled.

"Yes, I'm sure you're right," I snarled. "But I didn't get to them." The story of my failed trip to the Whitsunday Islands is a long one. It involves a 55ft racing yacht, a long bus journey and a cyclone called Justin. It culminates in horizontal rain, a race to the airport and a flight into a storm.

The Whitsundays — an archipelago of 74 islands, some no more than 100 yards across — lie off the coast of what is called "Tropical North Queensland" some 300 miles south of Cairns.



A satellite photograph of Cyclone Justin in the Coral Sea

Staying in Cairns, I had been tempted by a sailing trip advertised at a travel agent. The assistant spun me a marvellous tale of a three-day cruise through the Whitsundays on a 55ft sailing ketch called, rather worryingly, *Rogue II*. Cruising between islands with evocative names like Blue Pearl, Daydream and, er, Chalkie's Sawmill, we would stop off at beaches, swim off the side of the boat and have an idyllic time. I signed on the dotted line and handed over my £15 deposit.

There are three ways to get to the Whitsundays from Cairns. You can fly straight to Hamilton Island, fly to Proserpine on the mainland, or catch the bus. Being a stingy sort, I decided to take the overnight bus to Airlie Beach, where *Rogue II* ties up.

The bus was fairly empty. There was me, a quartet of Japanese students who fell asleep as soon as we left Cairns and three Norwegian backpackers. As we piled on to the bus, one of them asked the driver whether he had any news about the cyclone. "What cyclone?" I asked one of them. "There is some cyclone coming in off the sea, I think. I hope it does not mean we can't go sailing."

I attempted to sleep, but I was disturbed by the combination of an uncomfortable bus seat, regular meal stops (why Queensland bus drivers think you want to eat at 3am is beyond me) and visions of being caught up in a cyclone on a yacht called *Rogue II*. Somewhere in the back of my mind

a little voice was saying: "What happened to *Rogue II*?" As dawn rose the driver turned on the radio. The news said that Cyclone Justin (it had a name now) was standing 250 miles off the Queensland coast, level with Innisfail. This was encouraging. We had passed through Innisfail more than five hours earlier. The coastguard had issued a warning to anyone offshore as far south as Lady Elliot Island. But where was this? I could not find it in my guidebook. Maybe it was north of the Whitsundays and we would be all right.

At about 8am we turned into a small town called Bowen. The only places that had opened were a café and a tourist information centre. I raced to the latter. "Any news about the cyclone?" I asked. "Oh, the cyclone," smiled the middle-aged lady behind the counter. "Isn't it exciting? We've not long moved up here from Victoria. It's our first one." I asked her if she knew where Lady Elliot Island was. She showed me a map of Queensland; Lady Elliot Island was about 300 miles further south than I wanted it to be. The Whitsundays were right at the centre of the cyclone warning zone.

I trudged back to the bus. On the radio, advertisements were starting to appear saying things like: "Don't let old Cyclone Justin catch you unaware. Stock up with kerosene, tinned goods and beer at Bruce's corner shop" or: "If you have not sorted out your

cyclone insurance, just call Sun Financial on 555 Rain." I stared moodily out of the window. The sun shone, the wind was calm; it was not even raining. Surely there could not be a cyclone on the way.

By the time we arrived at Airlie Beach, things had changed. The weather had set into a regular 15-minute cycle. First it was sunny, then the clouds came and the rain would start, then the wind picked up and the rain drove in at an angle of 90 degrees and you could hardly walk.

My deposit slip told me I had to go to the Downunder Sail & Scuba Centre to check in. Places are not hard to find in Airlie Beach. It only has one main street which is about a mile long. However, it took me a good 20 minutes to walk down to Downunder. Wind-swept and soaked, I said to the desk: "I'm booked on *Rogue II* tomorrow. I don't suppose it'll be going."

"Well," said the assistant. "Don is a very hardy captain. He won't call off the trip until he is sure he is not sailing. So I reckon he'll decide tomorrow."

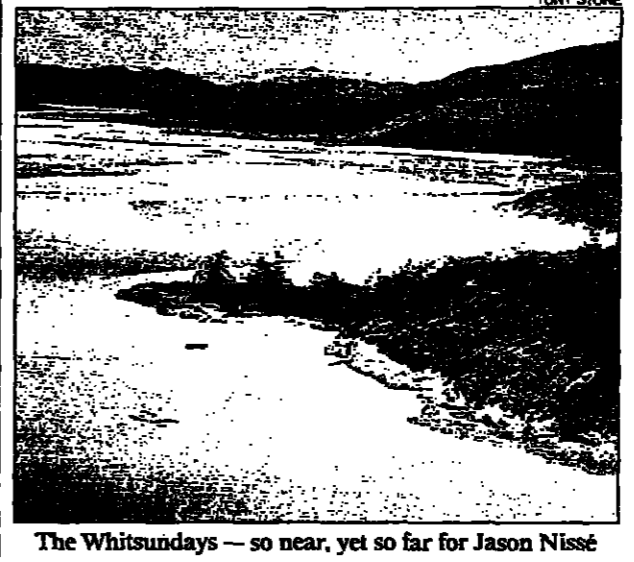
"Most of the other boats have already called off their trips," said a hairy guy standing in the corner, checking out the fishing equipment.

I said I needed to know because I was not keen on being stuck in Airlie. "They've closed Hamilton airport," said the hairy man. "Don't know if Proserpine is still open." I rang the Ansett Australia airline desk. "Are you still flying?" I asked.

"We've got one flight at 2pm to Brisbane and Sydney, and there is one seat left on it," said the assistant. I made my way up the wind and rainswept main street to where I could take a bus to Proserpine airport.

Bedraggled holidaymakers were clinging to a white-washed wall. The wind buffeted the bus as it made the 20-minute journey. "You folks are going to miss all the fun," the driver joked. We did not laugh.

I arrived back in Sydney, where it was 50F, wondering what had hit me. The taxi driver asked where I'd been. "The Whitsundays," I answered. "Oh, we went there last year," he smiled. "They're beautiful."



The Whitsundays — so near, yet so far for Jason Nissé

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Why the people still dig Blackpool

It may not suit New Labour, but Alex James finds a Victorian gem

It was the lack of good restaurants that helped see off Blackpool as a Labour Party conference venue. The "New Labour" leaders gave that as one of the main reasons when they announced that after 70 years of faithful service, they will quit Blackpool after this autumn's conference for future get-togethers in southern seaside resorts.

And it has to be said that the dining selection in Blackpool is poor. Anyone allergic to fish and chips should stay away. (For those not allergic, wander down Dickson Road to one of the best chippies in Britain: The Derby Supper Bar.) But the winds of culinary change are blowing. A continental pavement café has burst into Birley Street and bistros are infiltrating Queen Street.

For a few pounds, you can test the aphrodisiac powers of Anglesey oysters at Robert's Oyster Rooms. Unfortunately, my wife and I were poised to enjoy the pine-panelled ambience of Robert's when our sons, six-year-old Dominic and John, two, started bawling at the traditional brine and vinegar odour and we had to relocate to McDonald's.



From bucket-and-spade holidays to the architectural wonders of its famous Tower, Blackpool combines family fun with surprisingly sophisticated entertainment

UNUSUAL FACTS

- 1 Princess Louise, daughter of Queen Victoria, inaugurated Blackpool Illuminations with the first switch-on in 1912. Other switchers have included Kermit the Frog and the Nolan Sisters.
- 2 Powered by 50,000 bulbs, Blackpool Illuminations, lit up from Sept 4-Nov 8, is Britain's biggest light show, stretching six miles along the Promenade.
- 3 Locals are called Sandgroians. Famous Sandgroians include veteran BBC journalist Alisaair Cook, ex-BBC Peter presenter Peter Purves and Cynthia Lennon.
- 4 Frank Sinatra stayed at the Clifton Hotel, dating from 1865, it is Blackpool's oldest.
- 5 Queen Vera Road, Blackpool's shortest street, is named after Vera Burn, the 1937 Cotton Queen.
- 6 The hourglass figure of Hollywood star Jayne Mansfield so flustered the mayor that he struggled to pronounce her name at an illumination switch-on.
- 7 Blessed with Britain's purest air, Blackpool opened as a resort for medicinal purposes in 1720. The first paying guests stayed in Ethan A Whiteside's cottage in 1735.
- 8 The world's first permanent electric street tramway opened in Blackpool in 1885. It is Britain's last operating original tramway system.
- 9 The best handmade confectionery is said to be found at Flutton's Fudge Shop, Abingdon Street, founded in 1920.
- 10 Pugin designed Blackpool's first Roman Catholic church, Sacred Heart, in Talbot Road. It was consecrated in 1857. The now-defunct bells were once renowned as the best peal west of Leeds.

Perhaps the lack of food is hardly surprising given Blackpool's boarding house and kiss-me-quick hat image. For years it has been the holiday stronghold of the working man.

But to dismiss Blackpool as simply working class is to oversimplify the issue. Up until the 1950s, visitors split into working class and working class respectable; further gradations depended on staying either on the central or the south shores. Top notch still is the north shore.

When retired lecturer Geoffrey Hill, from St Helens, first went on a week-long family holiday in 1947 with six couples and seven children in the same boarding house, they stayed in the least desirable central Blackpool. Rationing was in force and they took their own food.

He says: "My brother Frank complained that the lighthouse beam kept him awake. There is no lighthouse — it was the searchlight on top of the Tower."

Later, the family moved upmarket: "In the 1950s we moved to the south end. We stayed at a boarding house so strict that it was like going to prison. One minute late for a meal and you were told off: five minutes late and they wouldn't feed you."

Times change. Blackpool is now home to northern Eng-

land's first transvestite bar. Funnygirls, in Queen Street, where Betty "Legs" Diamond is the star attraction, has tripled capacity to accommodate the crowds since opening three years ago.

Change is not always for the good. Variety entertainment is dying because of southern prejudice, says Amanda Thompson, who runs the Pleasure Beach.

This year's BBC documentary about the Pleasure Beach may have accelerated the decline. She says: "That wretched TV documentary depicted us as unsophisticated, trash, northern entertainment, and we left that behind long ago. It made us look tacky, but if people look a little deeper they will see that that's not us at all." However, business increased by 40 per cent at Easter following the documentary.

While the Golden Mile no longer appeals to Labour, Blackpool still appeals to 17 million visitors a year. The real earners are the Pleasure Beach theme park and the 518ft tall Tower, which is now for sale.

Built in 1894 and based on Eiffel's Parisian folly, the Tower is perfect for architecture buffs laden with children. This must be the only Grade I listed building housing 11 attractions, including a



A familiar sight: donkeys still take children for rides along the Golden Mile

dinosaur ride and aquarium. Its art deco bars and a few pints at £1.25 are all the encouragement needed to elbow through happy hour crowds.

Unburdened by ideas of taste or self-improvement, children are congenitally attracted to the Tower and Pleasure Beach and it is pointless for adults to resist. Nicola and Jonathan Holmes, who were with their family from Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire, got to the Pleasure Beach at 11am and were still there five hours later. The Pepsi Max Big One, the tallest and fastest roller-coaster in the world, was their favourite ride.

If rides pay, they stay — so die-hard fogies can twirl around sedately aboard traditional wooden merry-go-round horses, accompanied by a steam organ medley.

The Morgan family from Middleton, near Manchester, visits Blackpool several times a year with their three children, Natalie, aged 13, Max, two, and Cecily, nine months.

Michael Morgan says he just enjoys the break, but his wife Sandra adds: "He comes for the silly rides — even before we had children."

Central Blackpool's gloriously tacky Golden Mile is



Among the big draws are the rides at The Pleasure Beach

best viewed from one of the wonderful pre-war trams.

The fabulously flamboyant Tower Ballroom, designed by the leading Victorian theatre architect Frank Marcham and glamoured in the recent Japanese film *Shall We Dance?* featured in television's *Come Dancing* and organist Reginald Dixon, who played the mighty Wuritzer, became synonymous with Blackpool.

Marcham's other examples of resort rococo include the Winter Gardens, a weather-proof public complex opened in 1878, and its Empress Ballroom. Relishing the outstanding art deco Opera House

requires suffering the musical *Summer Holiday*, but the kids will forgive you for trailing them round the gardens.

As Mancunians, the Morgans avoided *The Magic of Coronation Street* across the South Promenade as "it's too close to home". This £3 million temple to the soap features an indoor, full-size replica of "the Street". Among slick technical displays, you are projected into a pre-filmed scene.

The cleverest trick is that you are parting with £5.99 to see old episodes.

But visitors are duty-bound to support Blackpool's last Victorian variety theatre, the

Grand. Built in 1894, with its jewel box-like auditorium, this is another of Matcham's great works. On Sundays from November 6, Ken Dodd will pack them in. As he explains: "If you can raise a laugh in Blackpool on Sunday, you get put down for a council house in the Falklands."

Oscar Wilde was unable to raise a crowd, let alone a laugh, for his lecture on aesthetics at Blackpool Library in 1883. On the wind-blown Lancastrian coastline, where trees are objects of special scientific interest, being instructed on the lily's finer points by a velvet-coated Irish dilettante was never likely to be a sell-out. A few years later, the building was converted into one of the first Yates' Wine Lodges, which it remains to this day.

But one of the season's most popular shows, starring Roy "Chubby" Brown, at the North Pier until November 6, fails to touch on aesthetics at all. It's basic blue biology all the way.

On the beach, the collective traumatic childhood memory in the north-west is being dropped off a Blackpool donkey miles from your parents. Our children, however, were returned to Central Pier and we remain a united family.

Back at the Pleasure Beach, Miss Thompson believes Labour's decision to quit Blackpool is a mistake. "Suddenly they're all too push to come to Blackpool when they get power," she said. "I don't understand what they want — we have good hotels, amazing entertainment and fine restaurants. We've been very poorly portrayed in the south and it's threatening to kill the live variety entertainment we provide."

"We are committed to invest more in our shows. We're fighting back."



Each year 17 million people visit Blackpool to have fun

AROUND AND ABOUT IN BLACKPOOL

■ Alex James stayed at the De Vere Hotel (01253 838866), East Park Drive, Blackpool; B&B from £130 per night for a double room. The Grosvenor View Hotel (01253 329250), 7-9 King Edward Avenue, North Shore, Blackpool; B&B from: £17 (£20 during illuminations).

■ Attractions: Pleasure Beach (01253 340033), free entrance; rides, £20 per book of tickets; opening hours vary according to season and demand. Blackpool Tower (01253 622442) — adults, £5.99,

children and OAPs, £4.95, families two adults and two children, £16.95, open daily 10am-11pm. *The Magic of Coronation Street* (01253 299253), £5.99; open daily April-Nov. 10am-7pm. Louis Tussaud's Waxworks (01253 629923); adults, £3.50, children, £1.80, open daily 10am-10pm.

■ Further information and Heritage Trail guides from Tourist Information Office (01253 478222), 1 Clifton Street, Blackpool, FY1 1LY.

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Ringling the bell for the empty house of Usher

Stephen McClarence finds mystery at the home of writer Edgar Allan Poe in Philadelphia, a city of unusual museums and surprising art collections

The door knocker of Edgar Allan Poe's house is a heavy black hexagon of iron. On it is a miniature portrait of the author, glaring maliciously, like a Beware of the Dog sign. Under it is a simple instruction: "Knock once. Please wait." I knock once and it echoes inside. Footsteps approach. An attendant opens the door and ushers me in. "I'm told there's not a great deal to see," I say.



Romping down Elfreth Alley, America's oldest street

"That's not strictly true, sir," says the attendant. "There is absolutely nothing to see." The 1840s' home of the author of *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* offers mystery and demands imagination. It is empty. Six rooms with no furniture, no fireplaces, bare floorboards, walls stripped back to the plaster and just the odd fragment of wallpaper, the odd trace of paint—the colour of damp, green mould. It is the ghost of a house.

It stands five blocks from the centre of Philadelphia, beyond the big-city bustle of bourgeois well-being, the glitzy restaurants, the plush hotels, the skyscrapers whose top floors, on this rainy afternoon, are wrapped in grey mist. Beyond the Greyhound bus terminal, past warehouses and parking lots. Look for the carved black raven on its 20ft column in the garden.

An Edgar Allan Poe visitor centre has been set up next door, with a reconstructed parlour whose crimson blinds bathe it in a bloody glow. But it is the house — where Poe wrote *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *The Pit and the Pendulum* — that 17,000 people a year come to see.

"Will you be taking the 45-minute guided tour?" asks attendant Dan Blake. A 45-minute tour of an empty house? "I talk about the stories," he says. "You have to understand that this house mirrors Poe. There are no traces of his occupancy. Only empty rooms: We may restore them, but Poe left no clues about what they looked like."

The floorboards creak as we move from empty room to empty room, looking at nothing. Poe's house is a connoisseur's choice perhaps a fanatic's choice, in a city rich in museums.

The grandest is the celebrated Museum of Art, which almost casually incorporates a complete southern Indian temple and a medieval cloister (with fountain). A police light from outside flashes through a window of 15th-century stained glass.

More startling, because less expected, is the Barnes Foundation, a collection of 180 Renoirs, 69 Cezannes, 60 Matisse and 600 other pictures, slapped on the walls like postage stamps in an album.

"See that Picasso over there?" says Nick d'Agostino, head of security. "Valued at \$60 million. Yeah, security's pretty tight. The cameras are watching me talking to you right now."

Visitors — allowed in only if their shoe heels are more than two inches in diameter (it saves floor damage) — file

round with audio-tour headsets clamped to their ears. Their eyes move over the pictures in synchronised appreciation. "Is this Manet or Monet?" a woman asks. The collection was established in 1922 by Philadelphia industrialist Albert Barnes. He took the pictures into his pharmaceutical factories so the workers could discuss them. The collection rivals anything in New York or Washington, cities which Philadelphia, marketed as "The Place That Loves You Back", is a bit touchy about.

Philadelphia is keen to attract tourists who have traditionally bypassed it in favour of its higher-profile rivals. They should not. Ask David Auspitz over a bagel breakfast at Famous Fourth Street, his downtown deli. Ask him and sit back. This man talks for Philadelphia.

Philadelphia is a serious business city with the mentality of a small country town. People say, "I like your tie," and you say, "Take it, you can have it." Catch someone's eye and say "Hi", and they say "Hi" back. Try it, say "Hi".

I try it in Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia's most elegant, with plane trees, people walking small dogs on short leashes and dedicated benches ("Myer Schwarz — he knew the peace of a park bench").

Two old ladies in trainers are on their way to the synagogue. I ask directions to the Academy of Music, home of the Philadelphia Orchestra. "Take a right down there," says one. "You from England, young man? You know Macclesfield? My daughter lives in Macclesfield." Back

with the bagels. Famous Fourth Street (next door to the Philadelphia School of Bartending) is filling up with people with arms full of Sunday papers, businessmen exchanging cards before they have even said "Hi".

The walls are lined with photographs of David Auspitz's father Sam, a Hungarian refugee who set up the business in 1923, old pictures of the Jewish Grocers' Carnival, the Yiddish King Lear (big beards) and former customers (Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter, sundry celebs). Auspitz presides for 11 hours a day, larger than life.

But even he has met his match. "You've met Mayor Rendell? What a guy. You call him at home at 2am and say, 'There are three of us here with a six-pack' and he'll say, 'I'm on my way'."

Ed Rendell ("America's Mayor" is a man of high-octane charisma. One short question and he launches into a two-hour outline of his vision for Philadelphia, with tourism (the universal elixir of regeneration) seen as one solution to industrial decline.

It is a virtuous display of civic confidence. "We want to make Philadelphia a premier destination city," he says.

Tourists used to come for one day and move on without staying. But things are changing. And history is our cornerstone.

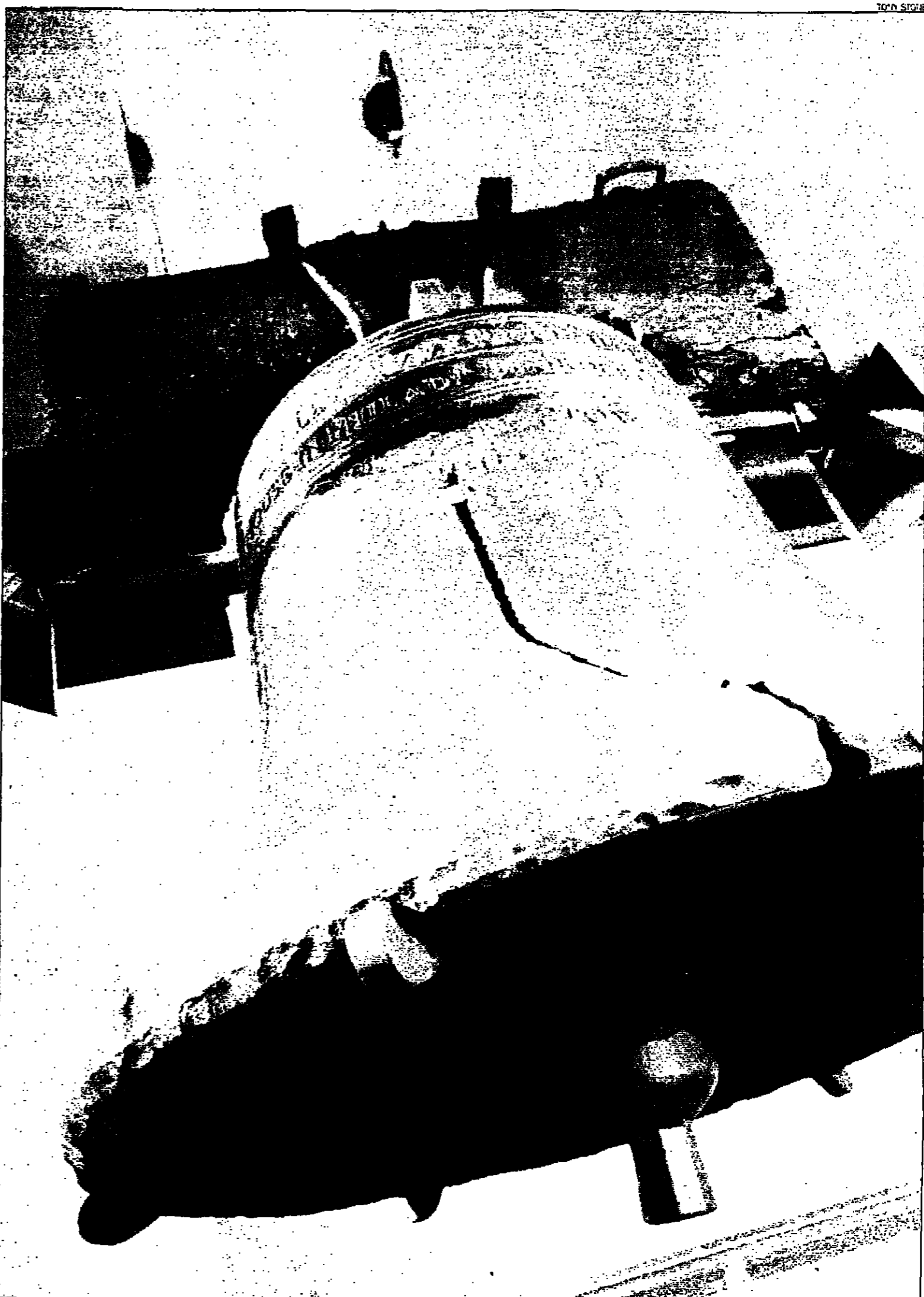
It was America's first capital, the Declaration of Independence was signed here; the Liberty Bell, symbol of American freedom, hangs here; Benjamin Franklin, inventor of most things American, lived here; Elfreth's Alley, America's oldest continuously occupied street (since 1727) is here — hewn in by high-rises.

See them from a recreated trolley-bus. "A river-to-river tour with on-off availability," as driver Randy says. And, she adds, the first bifocals and pencils with attached erasers were made here.

Rendell's vision moves on beyond history. He has the popular touch. He has come up with plans for a \$230 million performing-arts centre. He has put town-criers on the streets to spread the good news. He wants July 4 celebrations to last until July 14.

He strides — big strides, confident — out of his office down the high, wide corridors of City Hall, America's biggest municipal building, and points out the portraits of his predecessors: 18th-century men in self-important wigs give way to 20th-century men in self-important suits.

A space has been left for Rendell's portrait. In ten minutes he is off to guest-conduct the final item in a Philadelphia Orchestra pop concert. Across Pennsylvania, Pitts-



A little worse for wear these days, the Liberty Bell, symbol of American freedom, hangs in Philadelphia. The city was the original capital of the US

Stephen McClarence travelled with US Airways and Pennsylvania Tourism.

Getting there: US Airways (0800 783 5556) operates a daily service to Philadelphia from Gatwick with connections to Pittsburgh. Fares from £416 in August, including taxes.

Accommodation: In Philadelphia, the Four Seasons Hotel (001 215 963 1500) has single rooms from £125 (£144 double) without breakfast. In Pittsburgh, the Doubletree Hotel (001 412 281 3700) has rooms from £56.

Eating out: Philadelphia's Famous Fourth Street deli (001 215 922 3274) serves delicious

meals (7am-6pm Mon-Sat, 7am-4pm Sun). Le Colonial restaurant (001 215 851 1623) offers Vietnamese food in a stylish French colonial setting.

Philadelphia Fish & Company (001 215 625 8603) has a superb seafood menu.

Pittsburgh's Grand Concourse (001 412 261 1777) serves fine food in a converted passenger railroad terminal.

Edgar Allan Poe House (001 215 922 3274) serves delicious

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597 8788) is open 9am-5pm daily from June to October; Wed-Sun from November to May. Free admission. Philadelphia Museum of Art (001 215 684 7868) 10am-5pm, Tue-Sun, Wed to 8.45pm. Admission £4.80. Free on Sun to 1pm. Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia (001 610 667 0290) 9.30am-5pm, Fri and Sat, 200 visitor limit, 12.30-5pm Sunday, 100 visitor limit. Admission £2. Pittsburgh's Andy Warhol Museum (001 412 237 8300) 11am-6pm Wed and Sun, 11am-8pm, Thur to Sat.

Admission £3.60. Fallingwater, near Mill Run, 70 miles southeast of Pittsburgh (001 724 329 8501), 10am-4pm Tue-Sun, April to November. Admission £4.80 weekdays, £7.20 weekends.

Reading: Books by Edgar Allan Poe include *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* (Wordsworth Editions, £1), *The Fall of the House of Usher* (Penguin, £2.50), *The Pit and the Pendulum in Selected Tales* (Oxford University Press, £2.50). *The Pennsylvania Handbook* (Moon Publications, £12.99) is useful.

Further information: Pennsylvania Tourism (800 300701, 49p per minute).

burgh is playing a similar tourism game. Its steelworks have gone, replaced by a cluster of swish glass skyscrapers that glitter spectacularly after dark.

The choking smogs, with midday as dark as midnight, are remembered only in the soot-blackened stonework of city-centre churches.

Pittsburgh is pushing a new arty image. Andy Warhol was born here and a former factory has become the Warhol Museum, the world's biggest museum devoted to a single artist.

It is a slick celebration of celebrity in the company of Jackie and Marilyn and Elvis and Natalie and Campbell's soup cans and pictures labelled

"synthetic polymer paint and urine". "People thought they would become more famous by hanging around with Warhol," says Colleen Russell, from the museum's marketing office. "At a recent sale, his cookie jars went for \$10,000."

Outside, the world works harder for its wages. Long, slow freight trains trundle across the city. The office workers' car parks have been filling up since 3.45am. Their briefcases glint in the early morning sunlight shafting down the canyons of offices.

Just over an hour's drive from the city ("Relax. Relax. Relax." say the signs. "Enjoy the ride. You'll get there") is

Fallingwater, one of architect Frank Lloyd Wright's most innovative houses.

He built it in the 1930s as a weekend retreat for the Kaufmann family, owners of a Pittsburgh department store. The glade the Kaufmanns bought included a waterfall and Wright built the stone-and-concrete house on top of it.

Wedged in a rockface, it is a piece of "organic" architecture incorporating boulders as fireplaces. It is also, the guides point out, the world's first house to use foam-rubber cushions, scattered among a classy art collection.

"Gee," says a face-lifted matron in a lime-green trouser suit. "These Picassos kill me."

Wright's most innovative houses.

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"Gee," says a face-lifted matron in a lime-green trouser suit. "These Picassos kill me."



Steel city Pittsburgh is going for a more contemporary image with the Warhol Museum

U.S.A.

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13 Oct	£599	24 Nov	£599
20/27 Oct	£599	01 Dec	£599
03 Nov	£599	08 Dec	£599

The price includes: Scheduled international & local flights. 5 nts Havana incl full breakfast; 10 nts Cayo Coco on all incl basis (see abv). Transfers. UK Dept tax of £20. Prices per person sharing twin. Not incl Cuba tax: £15. Local depn taxes. Optional insurance: £35. Booking conditions apply.

To book, telephone: (open daily inc Sat/Sun) **01306 744300**

Fax: 01306 744334

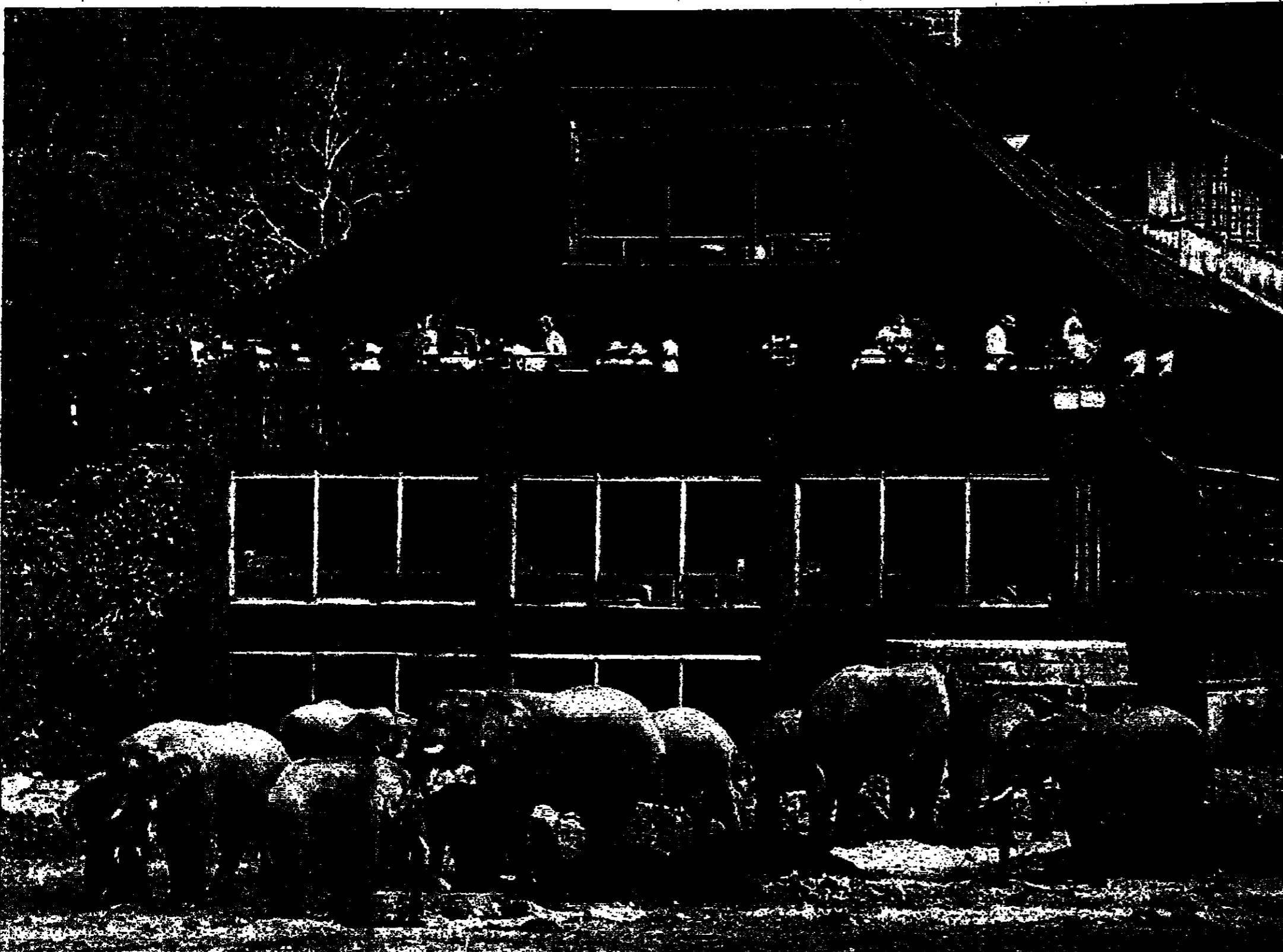
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TRAVELLERS' BULLETIN BOARD

Wildlife with no place to hide



Sightings of many species have increased since the recent forest fires. The introduction of flying safaris will enable tourists to avoid long and uncomfortable road journeys between wildlife parks

The fires which have burnt up to a quarter of one of Kenya's largest national parks have brought unexpected benefits to tourists — spotting wildlife is now easier than it has been for many years.

A tract of tall, thick grassland the size of Wales, in the popular Tsavo East National Park, burnt last month before Kenya Wildlife Services got the fires under control. This grass normally obscures animals but now it is shorter, leaving a clear view.

John Muhanga, the park's chief warden, says that sightings of many species, including elephants, rhinos, lions, leopards and zebra, have increased.

"We have had a few showers recently and already there is fresh nutritious grass that is bringing out more of the grazing herbivores and browsers," he said.

Jonathan Oakes, group marketing director of the United Touring Company, said: "We are being told that there has been no loss of any big mammals in the park and that game previously obscured by bushes can be seen from quite a distance."

John Hayes, worldwide product manager at British Airways Holidays, said that now is the time to take a safari holiday. The company is offering two-centre holidays of a Kenya safari with a stay on a Kenyan beach, or on Mauritius or The Seychelles in the Indian Ocean.

The company is offering the Indian Ocean islands as an alternative to Mom-

This is a good time for a Kenyan holiday, says Jeannette Hyde, because forest fires have cleared the view for tourists on safari

basa because the Kenyan coast is not as popular as in the past.

Prices to Kenya are lower than usual this year as a series of events, including social unrest, the introduction of a £35 visa fee and anti-malaria drug scares led to a massive drop in visitors to the country. Kenya greeted just 700,000 visitors last year — 100,000 fewer than in 1991.

Mr Hayes added: "Although business has been slow to Kenya it is beginning to come back. Most of the problems were related to political violence. It never really recovered from that. Although business is not at the levels we had in previous years,

it is definitely turning the corner." Stuart Douglass-Lee, head of planning at long-haul tour operator Abercrombie & Kent, said the company would start offering flying safaris in small light aircraft, to make access to remote areas easier.

"Flying safaris mean that people will be able to avoid the long and uncomfortable bumpy road journeys to get to different parks."

Mike Mockler, Abercrombie & Kent's senior co-ordinator of escorted wildlife tours, said: "August is the peak season for wildlife viewing in Kenya anyway because it is the dry season. Viewing is particularly

good in the Masai Mara, where thousands of wildebeests migrate from Tanzania — hotly followed by many predators." And, indeed, by tourists.

Ellis Jones, product executive for Africa at Kuoni said: "Our programme to Tsavo has not been changed in any way since the fires and we are getting very positive feedback. A lot of animals have returned to the surrounding edges of the lodges."

He said that the ground was black in some areas following the fires, but this did not affect animal viewing.

But despite the good news of extra game viewing for tourists, environmentalists are concerned about the long-term impact of the fire's destruction on elephants who have to search further and wider for food.

Some crumbs of comfort in Crete

WHILE most of the Mediterranean swelters under baking temperatures, as we report on page 23, there are still places where the heat is bearable. Southern Crete, where I have spent the past week, is one, because the temperatures are moderated by strong winds that gust down the gorges of the Psiloritis mountains to the sea.

I was staying in the small, friendly resort of Plakias, due south of Rethymon. Temperatures might have been in the mid-thirties, but it felt bearable because of what I can only describe as a gale that blew for much of the week.

There were, of course, a few disadvantages to this. Bread rolls blew off taverna tables. Those of us with long hair had nothing but bad hair days. Once I and others on the beach watched a couple swim for half an hour to catch up with their umbrella, which was blown out to sea by a particularly strong gust. And if I came out of the sea just as the wind got up, I would be showered with sand and end up looking like a sesame seed bun.

IT HAS long been axiomatic that a good fish meal in Greece, despite the fact that it is a maritime nation, costs a fortune. I still have palpitations when I recall a lunch on Rhodes two years ago, where one very ordinary fish dish for two set us back £40.

So I was pleased to find, thanks

TRIP WIRES



by Cath Urquhart

TRAVEL EDITOR

to the strong pound, that this no longer seems to be the case. In Crete I found it difficult to spend more than £7 on a meal that might include tuna or swordfish steak. One night I took two friends out for dinner at the long-established Christos's Taverna on the waterfront in Plakias, where we chose several mezes, various fish dishes and sampled the local retsina.

We tried, but we couldn't push the bill above £25 for three.

AS REGULAR as the first cuckoo of spring is the first appearance of the mysterious Spanish mugging bird of summer. Every year readers tell us of this con trick, which seems to happen mostly in Spanish cities, but we've also heard of cases in cities in eastern Europe and South America.

Reader Robert Harrison from Wareham in Dorset was caught out during a recent trip to Barcelona with his wife Ann. "We were resting in a quiet street, sitting on a bench under some trees, map reading and in the process of taking some cash from my wallet, when an apparent bird offloaded excreta over us," he begins.

Needless to say, a solicitous fellow appeared within seconds to help mop up the couple and in the confusion, managed to depart with Mr Harrison's wallet.

Musard in Madrid, peanut butter in Prague, tomato ketchup in Lima — we've heard endless variations of this trick. So keep hold of your cash and if this happens to you, make a big fuss and shoe your "helpers" away.

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Burmese exodus

AN ADVENTURE tour operator is to stop offering holidays to Burma, bowing to pressure for a tourist boycott which continues ten years after the bloody suppression of the uprising against the country's military regime. Tom Chesshyre writes.

A spokesman for Exodus, which is sending 22 tourists to Burma this year, said: "If anyone inquires about our Burma trips, we send them a fact sheet which highlights the moral issues to consider. Next year we will not be running the trips as we want to be seen to be doing the right thing."

Today marks the 10th anniversary of the uprising. Human-rights activists say that cash from foreign visitors is helping to sustain the regime and that forced labour is being used to build roads and railways taking tourists to sights. They also point out that visitors are going against an appeal from Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the country's pro-democracy group, to stay away.

The Burma Action Group is today organising a pro-democracy demonstration on London's South Bank (at 11.15am) to help draw attention to the role tourists play in sustaining the military regime.

A spokesman said: "Visitors do not realise that forced labour has been used to build the roads they travel along, or that their foreign currency is very important to the regime." He said few visitors realised that forced labour had been used to develop major tourist sights including the Royal Palace in Mandalay. Several British tour operators still offer packages in Burma, although

the total number of Britons who visit the country each year is not known.

Bur Christopher Gow, director of Symbiosis Expedition Planning, said: "We have never sent tourists to Burma because forced labour is used to develop tourism."

Rory MacLean, whose book about Burma, *Under The Dragon: Travels in a Betrayed Land* was published this week (HarperCollins, £16.99), said: "My book intends to bear witness to the tragedy and suffering in Burma. Tourism should definitely be discouraged."

Forced labourers improve Mandalay's Royal Palace

SORRENTO & THE BAY OF NAPLES

7 nights from £360 half board - based on the lovely Hotel Ascot or for a supplement of £19 per night the 4-star Grand Hotel Vesuvio

This captivating area is one of those corners of the world blessed with a gentle climate, stunning coastal roads, the colours of lemons, oranges, bougainvillea, azure sea and sky and the Italian gusto for life, all bathed in an inspirational light. Relax and absorb the exquisite surroundings, enjoy good food and wine and there are also some fascinating historical sites such as Pompeii and Paestum.

The flight is from Heathrow to Naples by British Midland scheduled seat configured Boeing 737 aircraft on Sunday 18th October. We have chosen two splendid hotels - the Hotel Ascot and 4-star Grand Hotel Vesuvio in Sorrento as our base to relax, to enjoy their fine facilities and from where you can explore the beautiful Amalfi Coast.

HOTEL ASCOT
This 3-star family-style hotel is located close to the heart of Sorrento and its main sights. It has 32 rooms each with ensuite facilities while the public areas include a restaurant, bar, lounge and air-conditioning. There is also a terrace and swimming pool.

GRAND HOTEL VESUVIO
Located two kms from Sorrento centre the hotel enjoys fine views over the Bay of Naples. There is a choice of restaurants and the 215 rooms are ensuite with bath or shower, air-conditioning and satellite TV. There are a number of bars and lounges and a large swimming pool.

DEPARTURE DATE & PRICES	
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7 nights per person in a twin room	
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TRAVEL TIPS by Jill Crawshaw



TRAVEL JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Picasso works go on show

More than 200 of Pablo Picasso's ceramics will be on display — the majority for the first time — at the Royal Academy of Arts' Picasso: Painter and Sculptor in Clay exhibition between September 17 and December 16.

His imagination fired by traditional Mediterranean forms and pursuits, from jugs and fish-plates to bullfights, the artist began to create his own ceramics after visiting the Madoura pottery in Vallauris in 1946.

A long stone's throw from the Royal Academy in Piccadilly, the Athenaeum Hotel (0171-499 3464) is offering a Picasso Package that includes two entry tickets to the exhibition and accommodation in a "deluxe room" with English breakfast for £195 per room per night, based on two people sharing.

The exhibition is open from 10am to 6pm, and on Fridays until 8.30pm. Entrance to the exhibition costs £7, with concessions for children, students and OAPs.

Two new autumn breaks from Intravel (01653 628862) highlight a lesser-known but fascinating region of France. "Amongst the Chestnut Trees" is a five-night walk in the Cévennes (Robert Louis Stevenson did much of it with his recalcitrant

donkey, Modestine), including a day spent with award-winning chef Monsieur Gomy. He will serve a special dinner themed around chestnuts at the Hotel Balme in Villefort and organise visits to a museum which features the importance of the chestnut in the local economy and history. The walking trip costs £415-£453, which covers flights, five nights' half-board and three picnic lunches, and transport of luggage each day.

Ay, caramba

All too often in my experience of all-inclusive hotels, "free" drinks mean queuing six deep for plastic cups of watered-down wine, warm beer or the cheapest brand of the local firewater. Not so at the new Riu Yucatan Hotel in Mexico's Playa del Carmen, where there are free mini-bars in rooms stocked with tequila, rum, gin, vodka, beer and soft drinks (all of which are replenished).

"Some guests over-indulge for the first couple of days," says the hotel manager diplomatically. "But our guests are generally couples and families, and they behave with restraint." Thomson Holidays (0990 502 399) offers one week from £725-£899 and two weeks from £1,049-£1,309.

On a gastronomic note, many Mexican restaurants are now wary of serving habanero, the stomach-churning green chilli sauce, as American tourists have threatened to sue for damages.

Devotees of the great outdoors will be interested in survival weekends in the Brecon Beacons led by ex-army instructors and run by Acorn Activities (01432 830083). You'll be taught how to navigate (using a compass), what's edible and what is not, and how to build a shelter from local materials such as branches, moss, even bin-liners — in which you'll be expected to sleep. Participants have included 40 and 50 year-old housewives, men sent on the course as birthday presents from their wives, as well as a group of (supervised) 16-year-old girls.

Christmas skiing

Family ski specialist Ski Hillwood (01923 200700) is pioneering offers for one-parent families during Christmas week and much of January and March, with child discounts applying when sharing with only one full-fare paying adult. Staying at the Hotel Bel Alpe in Les Gets in France at Christmas, adults will pay £505 for flights, transfers and half-board accommodation.

Children under two will pay £35, two year-olds £185, with a 40 per cent reduction for three to six year-olds, and 15 per cent off for those aged between seven and 12 years.

Dad on the road

When TV travel journalist Matthew Collins announced he was travelling across America for three months with his three and four year-old sons while his wife stayed behind to work, the reaction was either that he was nuts, a hero or a swine.

But last summer, with his wife's full approval, he set off on a 6,496-mile journey in a rented motorhome to get to know the USA — and his sons Charlie and Nicolai before they started school. Across America with the Boys (MATC Publishing, £6.99, signed copies available on 0171-385 9977) is a warm, humorous account of the pleasures and pitfalls of their journey from Orlando to Los Angeles. Worst moment: a brush with the law in Texas for failing to report a minor accident. Best advice: don't take too much luggage — from shoes to nappies, almost everything is cheaper in the US.

Travel articles in The Times since last January are on our internet site. See "Most Recent" links on http://the-times.co.uk



See a collection of ceramics made by Pablo Picasso at the Picasso: Painter and Sculptor in Clay exhibition in central London



Matthew Collins and sons make a watermelon stop in Arkansas

Flying high for a bargain

BA is selling cheap flights this weekend, says Joanna Hunter

TRAVELLERS have good reason to thank seat-at-home World Cup football fans for us weekend's special sale of bargain air fares. British Airways has responded to the ump in sales that accompanied the World Cup by offering more than two million seats at what the airline claims are its lowest prices in years. The seats will be on sale from 9am today until midnight tomorrow, and are available between today and November 30. There is a minimum two-night stay.

Ticket prices have been cut by up to two-thirds, starting at 59 return for flights between London and Scotland. There are many reductions: for example, Barcelona and Lisbon are £99 return (saving up to £105). Long-haul bargains include Cape Town and Harare or £299 (saving up to £387).

Tickets will be available at travel agents across the country. BA's Regent Street store in London will stay open until 9pm today and selected stores — including those at Victoria Station and Selfridges in London, and in Manchester, Edinburgh, Kingston and Bromley — will open on Sunday. Tickets can also be bought by phone (0345 222111) and on BA's website.

A BA spokesman said: "So many people stayed home during the World Cup and didn't book a holiday that we now have the chance to offer bargains to some superb holiday destinations."

However, low-cost carrier easyJet said: "Their sale prices are the same as our starting prices all year round. They are obviously feeling pushed by the competition to offer bargain seats during the peak season."

Table with columns: Route, Promotional Fare, Flexible Fare. Lists various flight routes and prices.

PACK YOUR BAGS logo with a suitcase icon.

Head for the hills with Headwater's (01606 486699) "Heart of Pyrenees" walking tour, which includes four hours of walks a day with a trained mountain guide.

Seven nights' accommodation at the Villa Podere La Castellina in Tuscany is £575 per person based on four sharing available from August 22. Apartments at Fattoria di Cinciano, also in Tuscany, are available from August 29. Seven nights' accommodation is £539 per person based on six sharing. Both offers include return flights from Gatwick to Pisa and car hire. Contact Citalia (0181-686 5533) for details.

Children travel free to Utrecht, Holland with Gad-about (01582 463444). Four nights' B&B at the Carlton President Hotel, near the Efteling theme park, and return Dover-Calais ferry crossing, is £199 per person. Up to three children under 16 travel free when accompanied by two adults. Departs daily; offer valid until August 30.

Africa without the jet-lag in summer. Jazz Summer School (0181-989 8129) near Montpellier, France, runs from August 16-23. The school, which offers workshops and tuition, caters for players of all instruments and for mixed abilities. Apartment accommodation, half-board and tuition for the duration of the course is £390 per person; camping facilities are also available.

TRAVELLERS' TIP



If you long for fresh, crunchy and nourishing vegetables when abroad, grow your own. Mung beans, lentils and alfalfa, for example, sprout in water and, in hot climates, will grow in a day. You can use any container to grow them in, but make sure you use purified water.

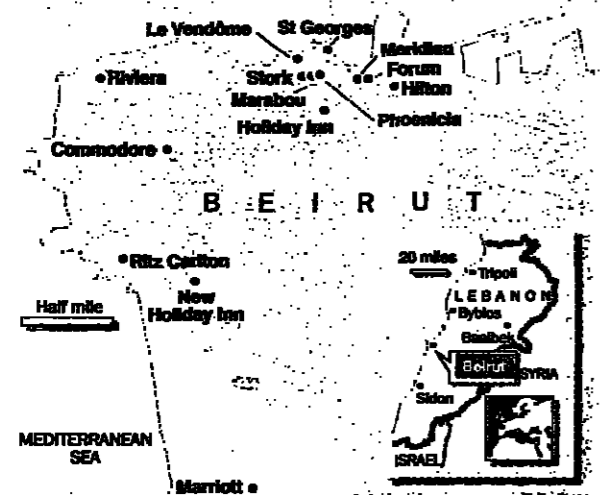
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With peace restored, Lebanon's new Battle of the Hotels is a fight for tourists, reports Kathryn Westcott

Shell shocked and shattered, Beirut rises from the ashes



Wander around Beirut's old hotel quarter, a symbol of the country's once-glamorous past, and you revisit some of the dramatic moments of Lebanon's 15-year civil war.

reminder of the 1975 Battle of the Hotels, when militias fought for control of the strategic crossing point that once separated East and West Beirut, Christian and Muslim.



The uppermost floors of the Holiday Inn in Beirut ablaze, following an attack by Syrians at the height of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975. Hotels were often seized by rival militias

the unluckiest buildings in the history of Lebanon's civil war: the unwelcome guests took everything that wasn't nailed down, along with just about everything that was.

doubled as snipers' vantage points, you will see signs of rebirth. Beirut's hotels have long been a barometer of the country's prosperity and in the immense junkyard below several multi-million dollar hotel projects are at the fore-

front of the Government's drive to lure back the tourists that once flooded to "the Paris of the Middle East".

SOUTH GEORGIA & THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

This expedition voyage offers a wonderful opportunity to those who wish to explore South Georgia in some depth. Most Antarctic cruises, which include South Georgia, visit the island for two days or so. Even so this marvellous place usually leaves a lasting impression on all who visit however brief their stay, as it is quite unlike anywhere else. If you have been to South Georgia before, you will probably wish to return and have the benefit of a longer stay. We have planned this trip to include a seven day stay so that we can comprehensively cover the island, seeking out its prolific wildlife.

South Georgia is without doubt one of the world's natural wonders 'the Alps in mid-ocean', offering remarkable concentrations of shoreline wildlife against a backdrop of glaciers and snow covered mountains.

During our stay in South Georgia's waters we will work our way along the wild coast to land on remote beaches, alive with great numbers of fur seals, elephant seals, wandering and sooty albatrosses, macaroni penguins and truly astonishing numbers of king penguins. Sit quietly on the beach and the penguins will come up close to you. These beach paradises are backed by some of the most breathtaking mountain scenery in the world. South Georgia is generally agreed by all visitors to represent the cream of Antarctica.

Our first Falklands landfall is at the eastern end of East Falkland, the tiny city of Stanley, a living relic of the British Empire, set amidst starkly beautiful and tranquil moonland. Swap your postcards with unique stamps, have a drink at the Upland Goose pub or visit the museum.

We hope to land by zodiac through the clear turquoise water to the almost tropical white sand beaches of Carcass Island. Behind the dunes Magellanic penguins peer out from their burrows amongst the sounds of tall tussock grass. Crossing to the sheltered anchorage of Westpoint

Island, we land to find one of the world's rarest birds which is common here - the sootied cormorant or Johnny Rook. Finally we will thread our way through the Beagle Channel and disembark in Ushuaia, the Southernmost inhabited city for the flight home.

The 'Sergey Vavilov'
Built in Finland for polar and oceanographic research the ice-strengthened 'Vavilov' has been refurbished for use as an expedition cruise ship.

Accommodating 76 passengers, her cabins all have outside views and are arranged over three decks. Deck 3 cabins have upper and lower berths, portholes and are close to shared facilities. Cabins located on decks 4 & 5 have two lower berths and windows. These cabins also offer private facilities or facilities shared between two cabins.

Public areas include a lounge and bar, small library, open bridge, clinic, sauna and dining room where an excellent and varied cuisine is prepared by a Western chef.

The highly experienced Russian Captain and crew have many years of polar cruising experience. The day to day management of the cruise will be in the hands of our experienced expedition leader and assistants who will also provide briefings and lectures throughout the cruise and accompany you on your forays ashore.

Itinerary in brief
Day 1 London Heathrow to Buenos Aires by scheduled flight. Stay overnight.
Day 2 Buenos Aires to Puerto Madryn in Patagonia. Stay 2 nights
Day 3 Puerto Madryn. Full day trip to the Valdés Peninsula for whale watching and Punta Fitzroy (sea lions).
Day 4 Puerto Madryn. Morning free in this interesting port which was Colonised by the Welsh in the 1860's. Embark 'Sergey Vavilov' in the afternoon and sail.

Prices Per Person

Deck 3 Twin without facilities	£4865
Deck 4,5 Twin with shared facilities	£5270
Deck 4,5 Twin with private facilities	£5680
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BEIRUT FACTS

- Getting there: Kathryn Westcott travelled to Beirut with British Airways (0345 22211). A BA World Traveller return ticket costs from £478.50 until September 30 (to include a Sunday night stay). Between October 1 and December 14, the price is £448.50. A fully flexible ticket is £1123.50. A Club World ticket costs £1790.50.
- Accommodation: Le Vendôme Inter-Continental (0181-971 2277) has superior double rooms for £119 a night until September 25. Breakfast included. Between September 16 and October 22, the same room will cost £150. The Commodore Hotel (0096 1 1350 400) offers double rooms for £121; a suite is £242. The Marriot Hotel (0800 221222) has a standard room for £122.50; an executive room is £167, breakfast included.
- Real tape: Tourist visas can be purchased on arrival at Beirut International airport for £38.40. Visas can also be obtained in advance from the Lebanese embassy in London (0171-229 7265). A single-entry visa costs £12 and a multiple entry is £24. Visitors will not be admitted to Lebanon if they have an Israeli stamp in their passport.
- Medical requirements: No vaccinations are needed, but travellers are advised to be up to date on tetanus and polio shots. Some doctors recommend typhoid and hepatitis inoculations.
- Further information: The Lebanese tourist office in London (0171-409 2031).
- Reading: *Fly The Nation* by Robert Fisk (Oxford University Press, £8.99); *Lebanon Travellers Survival Kit* by Carole Cartwright and Anna Sutton (Vacation Work Publications, £9.99).

WEBWORLD

- THE "WHERE DO I START?" SITE:** Lebanon's official homepage and link to online resources is at www.lebanon.com/index.htm. Lonely Planet's no-nonsense assessment of Lebanon and Beirut as travel destinations. Another site - www.fieldingtravel.com/dp/dangerous_places/lebanon/ira.html - is the colourfully written *Dangerfinder* guide, with tips on getting around.
- THE MUGGING-UP SITE:** Visit the Arab-angled www.nala.com/lebanon/Histoire.html for a history of Lebanon. And at www.uni.com/kip/Support/K12/Support/Beirut.html there's a simple breakdown of events leading up to the 1975 Battle of the Hotels. Web site hcg.ohio-state.edu/~abdallah/Leb.html is a brief guide to all aspects of Lebanon, including links to hotels' homepages, such as the Riviera's at www.destination.com.lb/Riviera/

LEBANON

- TRAVELLERS' TALES**
SITE: www.yudel.com/pescetalk/arcoc27.htm is a Middle East peace forum, utilising the neutrality of the Internet for a non-confrontational debate.
- KER-CHING!** The best deals site: cheap flights can be booked through <http://www.cheapflights.co.uk/Beirut.html>. The site also has links to The Travel Bookshop and Arabic for Travellers.
- "WELL, I NEVER"** the random site: Les Chansonniers, based in Beirut, claim to be the first political comedy troupe in the Middle East. Visit their homepage <http://www.chansonniers.com/> to access "the first serious clone shop on the web". The Beirut Hash House Harriers at <http://www.gocities.com/Colosseum/Track/3709/index.html> invite you to join them in a game of human hares and hounds designed to promote fitness.
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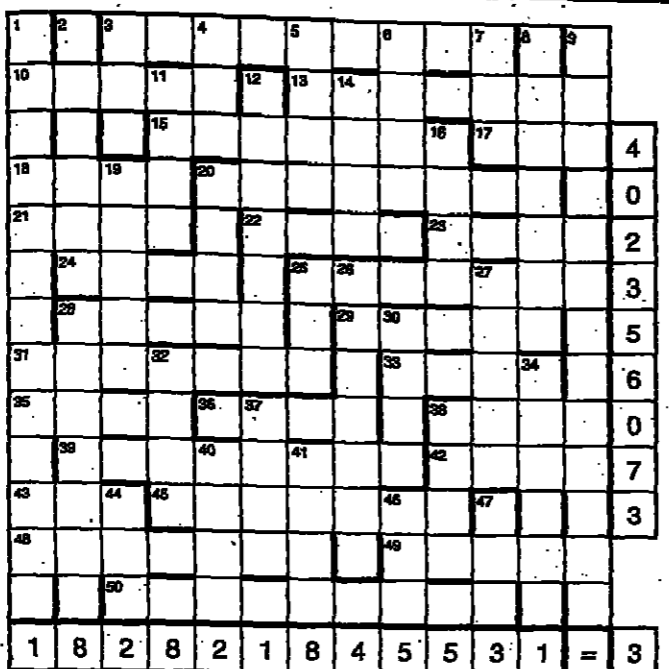
HOTEL BREAKS

Grid of hotel advertisements including: JERSEY AT ITS BEST, LUXURY CHAMPAGNE BREAKS, CRICKLADE HOTEL, FREDRICKS HOTEL, EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK, SUFFOLK HERITAGE COAST, ARMAITHWAITE HALL HOTEL, LANGDALE, SUMMER AT PARKHILL, THE BLACK SWAN, PARKHILL HOTEL, SUMMER BREAKS, THE MOST BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES IN THE COCOWOLDS, BOARS HEAD HOTEL, EXMOOR Whitechapel Manor, BOTLEY PARK HOTEL, GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB, RELAXED SUMMER BREAKS, STONE MANOR, THE SPORT & CRAFT MANOR, OAKLEY COURT, SUMMER AT THE THURLESTONE HOTEL, ORESTONE MANOR, THE OLD CHURCH HOUSE INN & HOTEL.

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THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

No. 3474: Word Deduction by The Tall'n



LISTENER CROSSWORD No 3474 in association with Waterstone's

NAME: ADDRESS:

Cut out and send the completed crossword and coupon above to The Listener Crossword No 3474, 63 Green Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL3 6HE, by Thursday, August 20.

Waterstone's advertisement featuring a large 'W' logo and text about their bookshops and services.

Down clues consist of one or more definitions of the answer plus a mixture of its letters, beginning or ending with the first or last letter of a word.

Nine of the across answers, those consisting entirely of letters from the title, are to be converted to numbers, using a code in which each of the ten letters converts to a different number from 0 to 9.

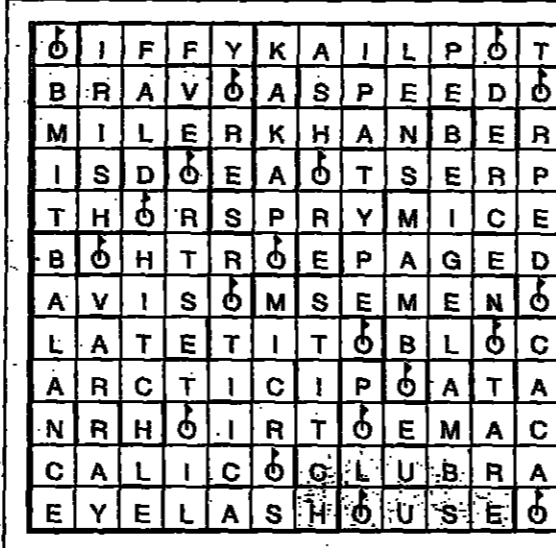
Solvers should enter the nine affected across answers in their numerical form in the final grid. Discovery of the code will enable solvers to deduce a theme word; using this, they should complete 50 across and highlight the name connected with the theme that is hidden in the grid.

ACROSS

- 3 Zany Saul's upset tray (9, two words)
10 A display-stand does not finish in the floor (5)
12 A bird on short branch taking in old tussle (7)
13 Infatuated, entrancing and understanding (7)
17 Misplaced first newspaper missing title (5)
18 Very good, well, tolerable (4)
20 Drift of young hooligan going back to church after difficulty returns (8)
21 Hurts working horses with acts of unkindness (4)
22 Winsos used to return regularly this sign of Bacchic frenzy (4)
23 Council lament missing king (4)
24 Arrange to swindle old-fashioned person (4)
25 Nazi deputy caught by grass retraced outdated opinions (7)
28 Edmund's taste in war on neighbour (5)
29 Pass silently by fearless strike (5)
31 Part of an old rig kills fish (7)
33 Giant size boots - they can only fit one in four (4)
35 Measure a French one (4)
36 Ian's remarkable piece of news for a stranger (4)
38 One taken in by an indefinitely vast number of the people (4)
39 Knight moving counter in moonlight scene (8)
42 The beginning, we hear, of eggario (4)
43 Mother leaves girl serving fish (5)
45 Anything retrieved from a dustbin or not used to be tipped to pieces (7)
48 Drink four rounds in odd places, using Italian, Indian, Australian currency evenly (7)
49 Learning nothing about a small room (5)
50 See preamble (9)

DOWN

- 1 A thorough search of scout terrain proves fruitless (13)
2 How American Indians were covered in dust or grime (5)
3 A valve on fixture in old laundry (5)
4 Belief in Zeus is not founded on Scriptures (5)
5 The sharpest needle is bound to give a dart of pain (4)
6 Estimate the best posture for old people (4)
7 A ten-syllable stanza for Spencer is not uncommon (5)
8 Ancient vessel's timbers extend outwards (7)
9 As an experiment I practise all yodelling tentatively (5)
11 He goes to explore Orkney's creeks (4)
12 Bill's fulfilled in substitution Ted's deed of covenant (7)
14 Open common on which old ruin is found (4)
16 Cottage rooms in Scotland lack gardens (4)
17 Patron will submit to being chased from pillar to post (5)
20 A weighing machine not required in the market place (4)
25 Yank's surprise when we get suit to fit (3)
26 Why horrendous events occur in a breeding ground (7)
27 Please shoulder Jack's responsibility (5)
28 Old rune recorded on disc in verse form (7)
30 I feel my cheeks glow as torches shine (4)
32 Dances to practise at school party (4)
34 Haggle over price if friends exchange a game (6)
37 Expressing defiance, butts opponents unceasingly (4)
38 People at a peace rally camp in a ring (4)
40 Houses in Glasgow do not have a tree outside (4)
41 Sew a border on one piece of cloth (4)
44 Is it right for locals to court Scots lass? (3)
46 A moron and not a white-kid was a logic circuit (3)
47 In modern versions of this Chinese game two players take from heaps of matches (3)



Solution and notes for No. 3471 The Open: 19th Hole by Loda

All answers to the 18 holes end in O becoming the "hole" surrounding each flag in the grid. The only other O in the grid appears "at the end of the game", ie. POLO which finishes in the CLUBHOUSE (indicated above) thereby locating the bar - the 19th HOLE required for marking with another flag.

The winner is G. Snowden-Davies of Cardiff. The runners up are Dave Piper-Jones of Cambridge, Richard Rogan of Cheltenham, Arthur Hodgson of Essex, J.C. Harding of Bristol and H.J. Godwin of Surrey.

Last week's winner was Marilyn Cluley of Gillingham, Dorset. The runners-up were Kevin McDermid of Newcastle upon Tyne, Derek Arthur of Midlothian, Stephanie Perks of Shropshire, Jeff Dale of Oxon and Mrs D. Waller of Essex.

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

SOME TYPES of error are more likely to be made by an expert than by a weaker player. This is a hand from what used to be called the Cavendish, now cumbersomey entitled The Microsoft Internet Game Zone Cavendish Calcutta.

This year the auction pool raised more than \$1.1 million, with the owner of the winning pair (Bob Hamman and Nick Nickell) picking up \$280,000.

Dealer West Love all IMPs

Contract: Four Hearts by South Lead: seven of clubs

West's opening was weak, showing 6-10 points and a six-card (occasionally five-card) spade suit. North's Three Spades described a good hand with a five-card heart suit and a long minor.

The declarer (Paul Chemla, who with his partner Christian Mari went for \$55,000, the highest price in the auction) won the club in

dummy and played a heart to the queen. He then led a second club. At this point West can beat the contract by ruffing in and playing a trump, but he discarded a diamond. That is the "expert" play - do not use up your trumps to ruff declarer's losers.

Chemla won the club and ruffed a club with the seven of hearts, then crossed to dummy with the ace of diamonds and ruffed another club. Now his only chance of making his contract was if West had started with five spades, so he led a low spade towards the king.

West could take his ace, and East the ace of hearts and the queen of clubs, but declarer had ten tricks: one spade, four hearts in dummy, a diamond, ace and king of clubs, and two club ruffs.

Even if West had not ruffed the club, he could still have beaten the contract by discarding spades on the second, third and fourth rounds of clubs. At the time declarer leads a spade, West is down to the ace-queen. He takes the ace, plays a trump to East's ace, discards the queen of spades on the queen of clubs and ruffs a spade.

Thus he would have got a ruff in a suit in which he had opened a Weak Two. That is the sort of curiosity my old partner, the late Irving Rose, used to love.

TGR Promotions is holding an auction pairs tournament at the Landmark Hotel in London from August 14-16. The organisers guarantee a first prize of £100,000. Entry fee £1,000 per pair; spectators welcome. Enquiries: 0171-26 2404.

WORD ANSWERS

- Answers from page 36 GUSTUS (b) An acting technique devised by the German playwright and actor, Bertolt Brecht, in the mid-20th century. DOGE (c) The title of the chief magistrate in the formerly existing republics of Venice and Genoa. FINNIP (a) A Yiddish pronunciation of the German word meaning "five". TAENIA (b) A genus of large tapeworms, some of which are parasites of the human intestine. The 4-10m long

beef tapeworm is the commonest tapeworm parasite in man.

TWO BRAINS

- Answers from page 36 Question 1 22, 23 and 35. We factor 17718: 2, 5, 7, 11, 23. This is the breakdown in the prime factors. The only way to get three numbers, each bigger than 19, is 2x11=22; 5x7=35 and 23 left over. Question 2 Nelson - Aboukir; Themistocles - Salamis; Howard - The Armada; Howe - Ushant; Don John - Lepanto. Naval commanders and their victories.

CHESS

by Raymond Keene

LAST WEEK I reported on the great victory by Michael Adams in the tournament at Dortmund. Not to be outdone, Nigel Short also

gistered a sensational win in the res. Memorial tournament in tonia. The British Championship in Torquay ended yesterday, this morning we should also ow whether Short has succeeded recapturing the title. Short's nes in the Keres Memorial were lete with enterprising ideas and gressive ardour.

White Joel Lautier; Black Nigel ort. Keres Memorial 1998. mzo-Indian Defence.

d4 e6 2 e4 Nf6 Nc3 Bb4 4 e3 c5 Nge2 cxd4 6 exd4 a6

vocative and unusual. The ndard selections here are 6... and 6... d5.

a3 Be7 8 g3

orth serious consideration here is move 8 d5, gaining space in the tre and following up with moves ch as Ng3 and Bd3.

...0-0 Bg2 d6 10 0-0 Nbd7

us Black has emerged from the ening relatively unscathed and s achieved the solid hedgehog mation without undue damage ing done.

Nf4 Rb8 12 e4 b6 Ret Bb7 14 d5

nally, White selects the course hich he should have chosen some ne ago. However, he has wasted nsiderable time with his king's ight.

e5 15 Nd3 Qc7 b3 Rb8

interesting choice. Black has a ajority of pawns on the king's rk, and now he also passes his oks in that sector to support their ential advance.

Bd2 Bd8 18 Qd1

blivious to Black's intentions, hite depletes his kingside.

WINNING MOVE

by Raymond Keene

ack to play. This position is from a game Andrews v Tate, iladelphia 1998.

The first correct answer drawn on Thursday will win a year's subscription to the Staunton Society. Answers on a postcard please, addressed to: Winning Move competition, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The answer will be published next Saturday.

Solution to last week's competition: 1 Bb5+

The winner is David Jennings of Hinckley, Leics.

MICROSOFT is entrenched in legal battles this year, taking on the combined might of 20 state attorneys in America in a critical anti-trust lawsuit. Bill Gates's baby has now launched a counter-attack, alleging that the state's lawsuits "unconditionally undermine the company's intellectual property rights under federal law".

The anti-trust case is due to come to court next month but before then, on August 18, Microsoft will feature prominently in another battlefield - vying for software sales in the lucrative run up to Christmas. Its PC CD-Rom title Urban Assault comes out in ten days and is a breath of fresh air in war gaming.

For the past few weeks I have been trying out the "beta" of the game - "betas" are the penultimate test version of an upcoming release. The game is addictive and has cost me the best part of a fortnight's sleep - and I am only a third of the way through it.

Urban Assault is a kind of Command and Conquer 3-D meets Doom. You play in two ways, first as J/C Special Operations dispatching your strategy and units in all directions hopefully to stem the hostile tide of progressively ad-

vanced enemies. For enhanced fighting power, however, you must play first-person against the enemy and jump behind the controls of one of your tanks, helicopters or planes. At this point the action is played out in satisfying, if blocky, 3-D. Your base station needs defending at all times. If you lose that, you lose the game.

It is the making of the assorted war craft which is the glossiest trick in this highly polished title. New units are made by spraying the cursor in the air. They then appear, as if by magic, and crash to the ground ready for your instructions and immediate combat.

If you thought you had seen everything top-down strategy war

COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES

by Tim Wapshott



Urban Assault is an impressive breath of fresh air in war-gaming

games have to offer, now is the time to think again. You start with three kinds of tank, then spy satellites join the build list. Next comes a two-seater helicopter, not too good in combat but useful for first-person observation and getting a feel for the landscape. The atmospheric presentation includes detailed computerised mission-briefings delivered in clinical female tones. As this is a Microsoft title, it is no surprise to find that loading and unloading the game is a doddle.

For optimum enjoyment you will also need a decent 3-D accelerator card, such as Creative's Voodoo2. If you have a sub-woofer in your sound system, the whole street will be rumbling when you blast off.

Urban Assault is a masterful and well-rounded experience, highly charged and so slickly produced that it is sure to be topping the charts in the ensuing months. It may even lay claim to the top slot in the charts over Christmas. A new generation of battle sims is about to meet us head-on and if you only buy yourself one game this year, make sure it is Urban Assault.

I HAVE never found that laptops and aeroplanes go together. This is

NEW SOFTWARE

DONALD SUTHERLAND plays a Ruskie with a captivating habit of slipping into an Irish accent in Virgin Interactive's Conspiracy. A crackling old and old-fashioned game, it is just one of the latest clutch of titles to join Sold Our's mega-budget range.

Conspiracy opens with Uncle Donald babbling on about us, them and conspiratorial dangers. The video footage next dissolves to reveal a crude-looking point and click adventure which is excruciatingly similar in style to the elderly Lounge Suit Larry series.

The graphics show settings such as your office, your boss's office, hallways and corridors. Conversational exchanges are stilled liaisons as you wade through various questions and answers in the text-only format. With the exception of the Sutherland clips, in every way this is the kind of game we were playing, and quickly tiring of, at the start of this decade. It is depressing to think now that we might even have been so bored as to have played this kind of game first time around.

Conspiracy's saving grace, however, is a fairly decent music score - good, but not good enough to prop up the rest of the experience. Better investments in Sold Our's latest batch might be Tilt, Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker and Kick Off 97.

Verdict: 3 out of 10. Dreary thriller wankily brought back from the dead. £4.99.

THE DARKER side of The Golden Game is opened up on Funsoft's On The Ball 2. This takes football management aims to a seedier level with dodgy dealing options available from the stock market to

the pitch. Now you can slip the opposition goalie a bung to let down his side, or hire small-time gangsters to injure the opposition.

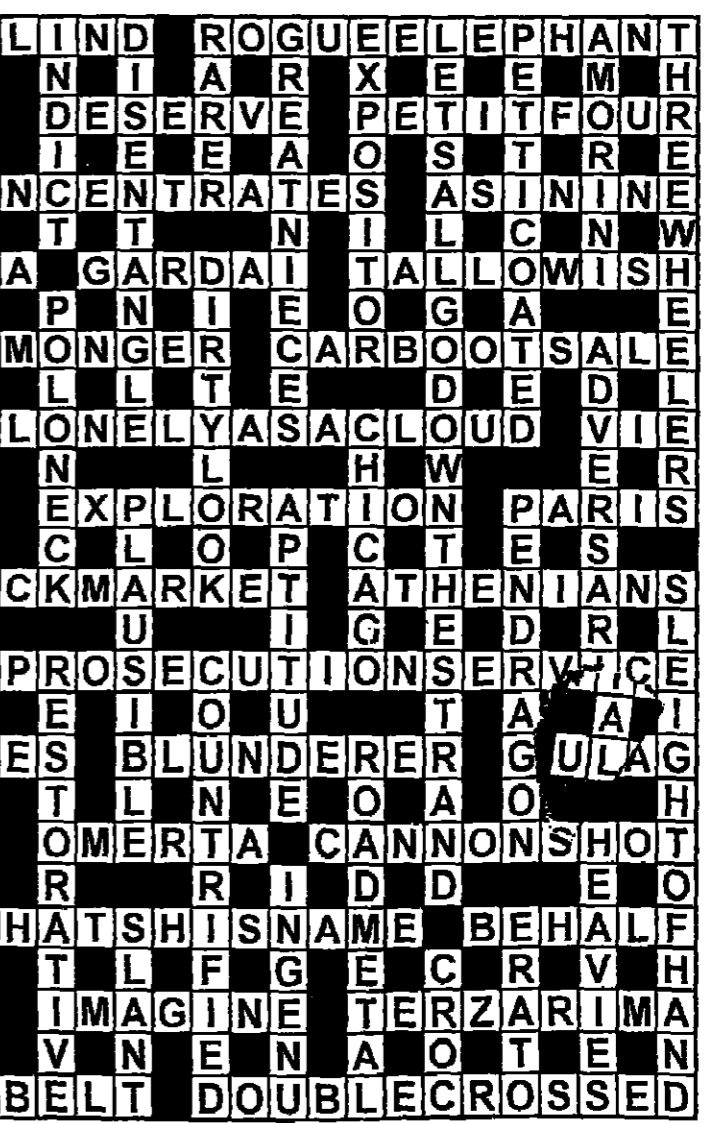
These are interesting spins on the idea, which otherwise saunters along much like any other management title. You hire and fire players, coaches and assistants. Building up a well-appointed ground and sweet-talking the fans are all part of the job.

The title strays from the norm when you play with the purse-strings. You can snap up shares in other clubs and artificially inflate prices - to make a quick killing - by having your own team throw a key match. Or you can take on the opposition with those below-the-belt tactics, which also includes dragging their star players.

While this is a smooth-running game, it does not quite hit the spot. The graphics are good enough, even for the animation of matches. But there are several grating features, the worst of which is the dire speech clips knocked off by some bloke from the West of England.

Verdict: 7 out of 10. Football manager sim with a dirty dark side. £34.99.

SOLUTION TO JUMBO 177



The winner of five Oxford University Press reference books is Angela Nayar of South Yorkshire

MODERN MANNERS

by John Morgan

Send your queries to Morgan's Modern Manners, The Times, Weekend, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN

Q My English daughter and her German husband, who live in the United States, are uncertain how to teach their children what to do with their hands at the table. Should they be in their laps when not eating? Or should their wrists be on the edge of the table? And when using the right hand only, what should be done with the left? Is there such a thing as modern international good manners? — Clare Taylor, Christchurch, Dorset.

best avoided. Coloured inks are to be eschewed. As far as the paper colour is concerned, white or off-white remain the most elegant. Blue again is girly. The ideal weight of paper should hover comfortably between board-like stiffness and mass-produced flimsiness.

Q Recently on a sunny day I was wearing my sunglasses when I met a friend who started to chat. I kept my sunglasses on while my friend was not wearing any. Would it have been polite to remove them? — Alice Rae, Hitchin, Hertfordshire.

A Politeness is always preferred to posing. Unless both parties are wearing sunglasses, or if there is a serious glare problem, then shades (particularly those with disconcerting reflective lenses) should be removed in conversation.

Q Many years ago, my wife moved away leaving me and our children. Since then we have divorced and both re-married, and my second wife has brought up my children since they were five. Now, three decades later, my son is getting married for the second time and the wedding is informal. As a result, my present wife and I are uncertain whether the mother of my children or the wife who brought them up should receive precedence and recognition next saw her I reminded her that she owed me money. This caused us embarrassment. Was this an impolite thing to do? Should I have forgotten the money and treated the matter as a family favour? — Mrs J. A. Stanton, Stroud, Gloucestershire.



Q While out shopping with my sister-in-law, we were about to pay for our purchases when she discovered she had left her purse at home. As she had no way of paying, I stepped in and paid her bill. (This was just over £50.) During the next two weeks I saw my sister-in-law once and spoke to her twice on the telephone, but she failed to mention her debt. Therefore, when I next saw her I reminded her that she owed me money. This caused us embarrassment. Was this an impolite thing to do? Should I have forgotten the money and treated the matter as a family favour? — Mrs J. A. Stanton, Stroud, Gloucestershire.

A Wedding etiquette for estranged families prescribes that the natural parents of the bride and groom briefly reunite for the wedding, with subsequent spouses assuming secondary roles. However, in your case there is a moral dimension that cannot be ignored, and I suggest you ask your son to decide which woman he would wish to see by your side on the day. Whichever choice he makes, it is important that the other woman be treated as a special guest.

A No, the well-mannered person, regardless of any family ties, is always correct about money and you were right to remind your sister-in-law of her debt. You could have avoided the confrontation by mentioning the matter to your brother (her husband) although I feel issues such as this are best confined to the relevant parties.

Q If a couple opt for two wedding rings, who pays for the man's? — Name and address withheld.

A His future wife.

Q Having read David Bankes's recent article, he mentions that blue ink is used by women. I have been trying to return to using a fountain pen. Can you please advise me as to the correct paper and colour of pen and ink used by a gentleman? — Alan M Calvert, Kelso, Roxburghshire.

A Black ink is the most formal and correct. Blue does have feminine overtones. Blue-black, although popular with academics, is

Q What is the best way of dealing with a serial interrupter? We are giving a dinner party and cannot avoid inviting a habitual offender. We would like to dissuade him from spoiling other people's conversations. — Name and address withheld.

A As soon as the interloper begins to interject, gently raise your hand towards the culprit while giving him a nano-second glance, before returning your gaze to the interrupted one and murmuring "you were saying..."

© The author is associate editor of GQ.



DAN BLAIR HAS FINALLY MADE CONTACT AND WILL RETURN NEXT WEEK

WORD WATCHING

by Philip Howard

GESTUS

- a. Latin for accommodation
b. A German acting technique
c. An equestrian society

DOGE

- a. Musical term for "heavy"
b. Slang word meaning "idiot"
c. Chief magistrate

FINNIP

- a. A five-pound note
b. A root vegetable
c. A cultural theory

TAENIA

- a. A Breton poetic metre
b. A tapeworm
c. A fictional land

Answers on page 35

TWO BRAINS

by Raymond Keene

"ALAN TURING (1912-1954) dared to ask whether a machine could think. His contributions to understanding and answering this deftly conventional classification. At the close of the 20th century, the 1936 concept of the Turing Machine appears not only in mathematics and computer science, but in cognitive science and theoretical biology. His 1950 paper, Computing Machinery and Intelligence, describing the so-called Turing Test, is a cornerstone of the theory of artificial intelligence." Turing by Andrew Hodges (Phoenix).

Question 1: The product of the ages of three co-teenagers is 1770. Find their ages.

Question 2: Link the following: Howard, Nelson; Don John, Thermistides; Howe, Aboukir; Salamis, The Armada, Ushant, Lepanto.

Answers on page 35

CROSS WORDS

by Brian Greer

Returning to my decade-by-decade survey, The Times crossworders of the 1940s still show marked differences from those of today. The principle that every clue should include a definition of the answer had not been established, as in: Beware! Nothing divides us from the Fleet (9). It was still common to present anagrams in this form: Girl-hater (anag.) (4-5) or without anagram indicators: I race for the heath (5). Straight one-word definitions were frequent. No pointers were offered to the homophones on which puns were based, as in: Not a hot weather condiment (10). Whereas I get the occasional letter opinionating that the crossword

is getting more difficult, it seems to me that clues such as those cited were less helpful than those served up now.

It was standard for the crossword then to include at least one quotation clue. How many of the following do you know? "He does it with better grace, but I do it more..." (Shakespeare) (7); "A rosy garland was the victor's..." (Spenser) (4); "And like sunrise from the sea..." (Shelley) (6); "Thy... aims have brought me home to the glory that was Greece..." (Poet) (5); "A jonquil, not a... lad" (Housman) (7).

The black-out is mentioned more than once and U-boats, Monty and rationing also put in an appearance, but there are

fewer references to the war than might be expected, one example being: Hitler's complaint of our part in the world? (5,5).

The real delight in these puzzles is to come across quintessentially Times clues that depend on nothing more than cryptic definition, such as: The one cricketer who is always out (7,5); It's not bound to work, presumably (4,6); To cover such events is often a matter of policy (10). The two outstanding examples are: It is hard to get anything out of this (5) and People sometimes lower them with the idea of raising them (7).

© The writer is Crossword Editor of The Times. Solutions on page 35

PICTURE LINE

READERS are invited to suggest what was said by Zara Phillips to Prince William.

This picture will appear again next week with an entry chosen from those submitted. Send your "speech bubble" suggestions — only on postcards please — to: PictureLine, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The Editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, August 12.

Last week's winning caption (left) was submitted by Colin McKay of Co Antrim, Northern Ireland.



QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"This appointment is replacing democracy with patronage." — Labour MP Dennis Canavan criticises appointment of Gus Macdonald as Scottish industry minister.

"It's a bit like driving across Britain with your head out of the window." — Richard Rodriguez after spending 1,000 hours on the Big Dipper at Blackpool.

"I can blow up bridges, ski mountains and

free-fall from the skies but in my heart I just want to be a woman." — Sergeant-Major Joe Rushton, who will be the first transsexual in the British Army.

"This is 50 times better than winning the lottery." — Geoffrey Woods, whose composition was played by the Welsh Guards in honour of the Queen Mother's 95th birthday.

"Africa Christianity is not far removed

from witchcraft." — A prominent American bishop replying to an African bishop's assertion that homosexuality is "a white man's disease".

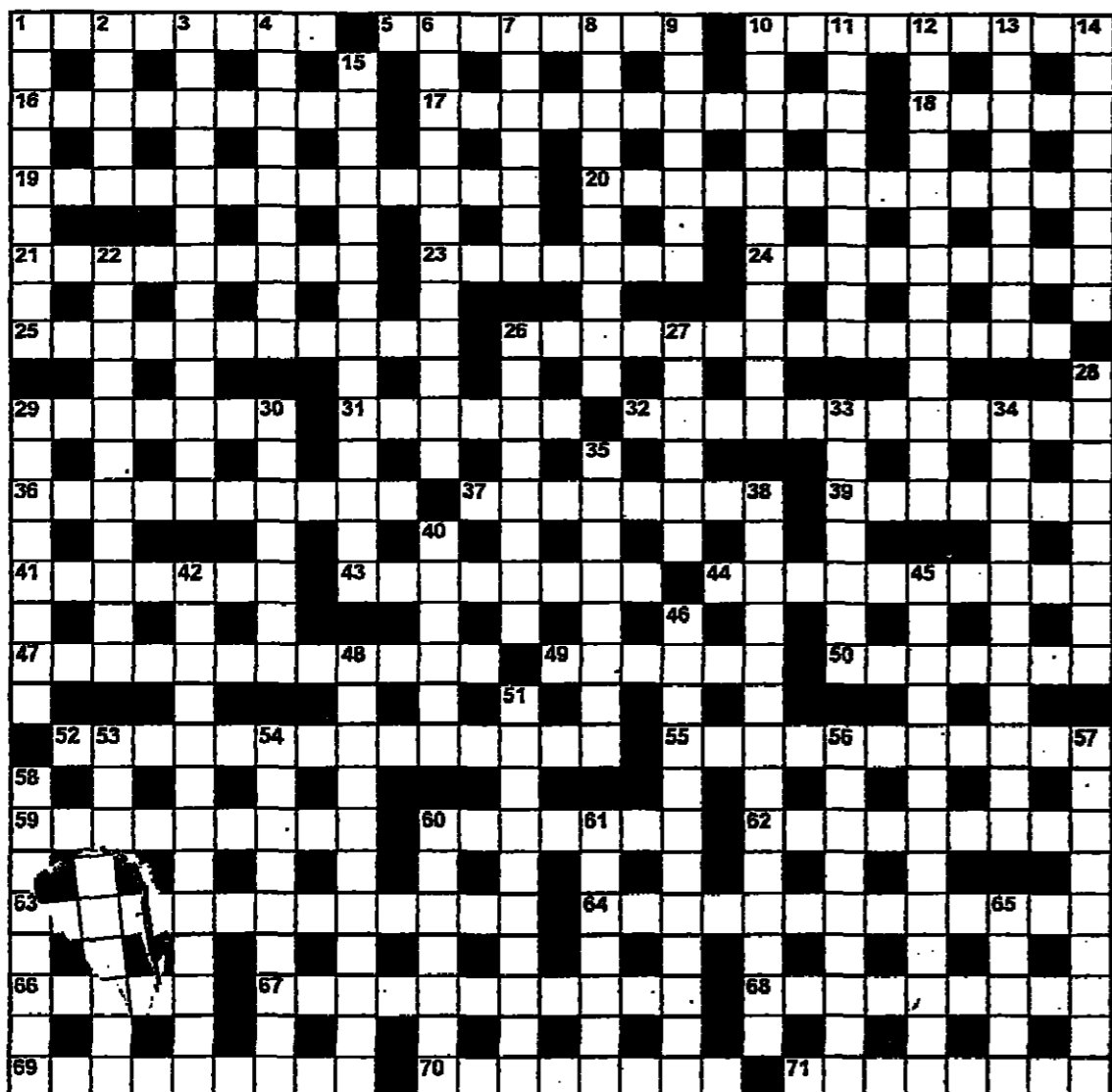
"The institution of monarchy is well past its sell-by date — and, indeed, is actually destructive. Without the monarchy we could have an open society, an open constitution." — Lord Rothermere, proprietor of the Daily Mail.

"Queen Victoria's husband had a ring attached to the end of his crown jewels." — The Sun highlights royal body-piercing precedents after the news of Princess Anne's daughter Zara's tongue-stud.

"Farmers must not be left at the mercy of the sea." — National Farmers Union replies to Commons agriculture committee recommendation that flood-prone land be abandoned.

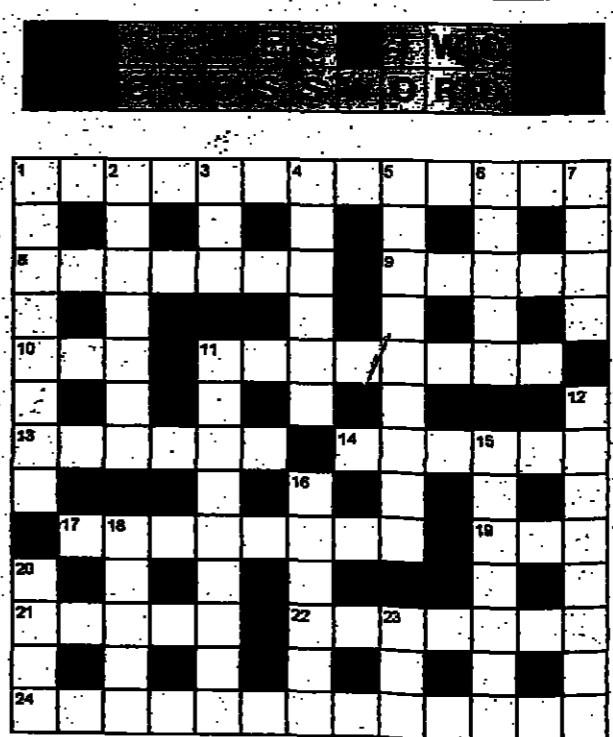


The prize for the first correct solution to be opened will be a collection of five Oxford University Press titles, the world's most trusted reference books, valued at more than £100. Included are The Oxford English Reference Dictionary and The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Quotations. Entries should be sent to: Jumbo Crossword 179, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN to arrive by August 20. The name of the winner will be published on August 22.



- ACROSS: 1 Dispensing largesse for weedy specimen (9); 5 Cavities primarily in centre of earth's surface (8); 10 I'll apply soft soap with flannel (9); 16 Outlet for designer fashions before spring (5,4); 17 A growing concern? (11); 18 It's tops for protective ink in ocean (5); 19 Elementary circuit operating in plant (8,5); 20 Former soldier is working abroad (13); 21 Going back on account (9); 22 Like some discs? There's 30 ordered (7); 24 Whitest surfaces cold to old in writing examination (9); 25 Crack troops might do Poles credit (5,6); 26 Without assignation, girl with Penny's support considered accepting one (14); 29 I'll put about a bit of sophistry and sue changing? (7); 31 Answer about team that's rejected fantastic solution (6); 32 Announce lied composed abandoning classical principles (3-9); 36 Remedies leave him very weak (10); 37 Rhyme about a certain artist (8); 39 Move back following paw's go before (7); 41 See Sid lick ice free of last bits of sand (7); 43 Navigation aid perceptibly weighs down sailor (8); 44 Furnace destroying crude sort with temperature (10); 47 Good holding capital in silver, but an unreal picture (7,5); 49 Not at all involving wife in row (6); 50 A layer of straw (7); 52 That's nice! I had records of debt, cast into fortress (14); 55 Extraction I roughly defined (11); 59 Tries in playing Lear seen here? (9); 60 Mine changed at 33 (4,3); 62 What should be sung with a gravelly voice? (4,5); 63 One finishes well after the rest (13); 64 Like some money where the summer traveller might be? (1,3); 66 Some do believe editorial markings (5); 67 Biased about French here, with power as going on gone? (11); 68 In Panama one needs several pounds to cross the Americas (4,5); 69 Like a round with equally matched sides (9); 70 As Lohegrin and Rheingold would be with the same finale? (8); 71 I'd clued name badly — you've got taken in (8).

- DOWN: 1 Odd fellow holding Conservative money (9); 2 Power in millstream was high in spring (5); 3 Reverse — or gist, conveyed in this (1,3); 4 Mineral having carbon with hard slippery character in place (9); 6 Simple definition taking all in? (1,2); 7 Unlimited mass one shed, turning out thinner (7); 8 Crustacean weaving its way across the beach? (6,4); 9 Property, if changing hands, would give rise to talk (7); 10 Prisoner initially in difficulty after prison — one that's involved in hearing (7,4); 11 He hands over on scoring runs (9); 12 Mail worker recovering from surgery (4-9); 13 Mineral plentiful around Hawaii — by Oahu primarily (9); 14 Crews in school is made to dry up (3,5); 15 Note tin can pile is unstable on the shelf (1,4); 22 I rival miser — unfortunately true, apparently (1,1); 26 Absolutely everything in one short stanza (8); 27 Bird's quiet admirer (6); 28 Some round errands finished early (8); 29 Sticking together he is turning up in fellow's embrace (8); 30 Turning 60, but involved with affairs now (7); 33 US legislature, has 23 thrown out (7); 34 Chips on board could make up this for Sparks? (11); 35 They won't keep their eyes peeled (8); 38 Quality of Holmes's remark to Watson? (1,4); 40 Notices about manure proverbs (6); 42 Number with power — a Roman Emperor's leader (5,8); 45 Calling this a verb would be so! (1,3); 46 Awful TV ridicule over hesitation closed tube (1,2); 48 Cyclometer I arranged, using muscle power (11); 51 Son with former partner wears out one mother, one Sunday in spring (10); 53 Club library (9); 54 Bad condition of dog's coat (9); 56 Bodily function triples at first from incurring retained ionisation (9); 57 Dick's upset with Ellen being given a bright coat (9); 58 Expression of surprise as Queen is described (8); 60 Inscrutable talk in a bar room (7); 61 More expensive plumbing's beginning to run colder (7); 65 Restraint about English beef in UK must be this (5).



No 1479

- ACROSS: 1 Garden bat/ball game (6,7); 8 Shine weedy (7); 9 Of the sun (5); 10 Part of body; obey (the fine) (9); 11 Olympic city, 1952 (8); 12 Pretty good (3,3); 14 Harsh, churlishly (6); 17 Talent, bent (8); 19 Small carpet (3); 21 Unaccompanied (5); 22 Supply; fit out (7); 24 Extremely funny (4-9).
- DOWN: 1 Combat (8); 2 Distinguished (7); 3 Share; lacerate (3); 4 One burnable at both ends (6); 5 Found; edic. establishment (9); 6 "Rich" peasant (USSR) (5); 7 Raced; ripped (4); 11 Weight; severity (9); 12 Animal as Mrs Tiggywinkle (8); 15 Gian Lorenzo — i.e. Baroque architect (7); 16 Complete, achieve (6); 18 Haughty (5); 20 Roman god of war (4); 23 Sewer rodent (3).

SOLUTION TO NO 1478: ACROSS: 7 Heart 8 Tourist 9 Mawkish 10 Tapir 11 Sure 12 Migraine 15 Testator 16 Band 19 Wrest 21 Spahula 22 Remarry 23 Cakio. DOWN: 1 Thames 2 Waxworks 3 Strip 4 Culture 5 Limp 6 Starve 8 Tchaikovsky 13 In a hurry 14 Salfire 15 Thwart 17 Dragon 18 March 20 Elms

THE TIMES BOOKSHOP. NEW TIMES CROSSWORD TITLES NOW AVAILABLE. The Times Crossword Book 1998, The Times Crossword Book 2000-2002, The Times Crossword Book 2003-2005, The Times Crossword Book 2006-2008, The Times Crossword Book 2009-2011, The Times Crossword Book 2012-2014, The Times Crossword Book 2015-2017, The Times Crossword Book 2018-2020, The Times Crossword Book 2021-2023, The Times Crossword Book 2024-2026, The Times Crossword Book 2027-2029, The Times Crossword Book 2030-2032, The Times Crossword Book 2033-2035, The Times Crossword Book 2036-2038, The Times Crossword Book 2039-2041, The Times Crossword Book 2042-2044, The Times Crossword Book 2045-2047, The Times Crossword Book 2048-2050, The Times Crossword Book 2051-2053, The Times Crossword Book 2054-2056, The Times Crossword Book 2057-2059, The Times Crossword Book 2060-2062, The Times Crossword Book 2063-2065, The Times Crossword Book 2066-2068, The Times Crossword Book 2069-2071, The Times Crossword Book 2072-2074, The Times Crossword Book 2075-2077, The Times Crossword Book 2078-2080, The Times Crossword Book 2081-2083, The Times Crossword Book 2084-2086, The Times Crossword Book 2087-2089, The Times Crossword Book 2090-2092, The Times Crossword Book 2093-2095, The Times Crossword Book 2096-2098, The Times Crossword Book 2099-2101, The Times Crossword Book 2102-2104, The Times Crossword Book 2105-2107, The Times Crossword Book 2108-2110, The Times Crossword Book 2111-2113, The Times Crossword Book 2114-2116, The Times Crossword Book 2117-2119, The Times Crossword Book 2120-2122, The Times Crossword Book 2123-2125, The Times Crossword Book 2126-2128, The Times Crossword Book 2129-2131, The Times Crossword Book 2132-2134, The Times Crossword Book 2135-2137, The Times Crossword Book 2138-2140, The Times Crossword Book 2141-2143, The Times Crossword Book 2144-2146, The Times Crossword Book 2147-2149, The Times Crossword Book 2150-2152, The Times Crossword Book 2153-2155, The Times Crossword Book 2156-2158, The Times Crossword Book 2159-2161, The Times Crossword Book 2162-2164, The Times Crossword Book 2165-2167, The Times Crossword Book 2168-2170, The Times Crossword Book 2171-2173, The Times Crossword Book 2174-2176, The Times Crossword Book 2177-2179, The Times Crossword Book 2180-2182, The Times Crossword Book 2183-2185, The Times Crossword Book 2186-2188, The Times Crossword Book 2189-2191, The Times Crossword Book 2192-2194, The Times Crossword Book 2195-2197, The Times Crossword Book 2198-2199.

Artists' Britain. We will the bom says Alb. Bathing of ra. Doub.